Cross-Cultural Advancements in Positive Psychology 11
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Linda C. Theron
Linda Liebenberg
Michael Ungar *Editors*

Youth Resilience and Culture

Commonalities and Complexities

Springer

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Cross-Cultural Advancements in Positive Psychology

Volume 11

The aim of the Cross Cultural Advancements in Positive Psychology book series is to spread a universal and culture-fair perspective on good life promotion. The series will advance a deeper understanding of the cross-cultural differences in well-being conceptualization. A deeper understanding can affect psychological theories, interventions and social policies in various domains, from health to education, from work to leisure. Books in the series will investigate such issues as enhanced mobility of people across nations, ethnic confl icts and the challenges faced by traditional communities due to the pervasive spreading of modernization trends. New instruments and models will be proposed to identify the crucial components of well-being in the process of acculturation. This series will also explore dimensions and components of happiness that are currently overlooked because happiness research is grounded in the Western tradition, and these dimensions do not belong to the Western cultural frame of mind and values.

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Linda C. Theron • Linda Liebenberg •
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Editors

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Editors
Linda C. Theron
Optentia Research Focus Area
North-West University
Vanderbijlpark
South Africa

Linda Liebenberg
Resilience Research Centre
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada

Michael Ungar
Resilience Research Centre
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada

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Preface

> Culture is perhaps the most neglected topic in the study of risk and resilience. (Feldman & Masalha, 2007, p. 2)

In 1955 Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith began their longitudinal study of children from diverse cultural ancestries, born in America's western-most state, namely Kauai. In many ways, their related 1982 publication, 'Vulnerable but invincible: A longitudinal study of resilient children and youth', galvanised resilience research in the social sciences. Despite the field's roots in a multi-cultural context, the irony of resilience research is that for the next two decades it would be dominated by a focus on minority world contexts, and informed by minority world perspectives.

By the twenty-first century an increasing number of authors began voicing their critique of the field's narrow investigation of children's constructive adjustment to adversity. Esteemed resilience scholars (see, for example, Boyden, 2003; Cicchetti, 2010; Masten, 2011, 2014; Masten & Wright, 2010; Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012; Ungar, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013; Wright, Masten, & Narayan, 2013; Zautra, Hall, & Murray, 2010) emphasized that until researchers and theorists account for the complex relationship between resilience and culture, explanations of why some individuals prevail in the face of adversity would remain incomplete.

This edited volume is in many ways a response to this critique. It comes literally 10 years after the Resilience Research Centre (RRC) hosted in 2005, the first international conference that focused on cross-cultural understandings of resilience. At this conference, the RRC and its network of resilience-focused researchers from all five continents showed that resilience processes are not culturally neutral. In the intervening years, work emerging from the RRC has continued to foreground the cultural relevance of resilience processes. Studies such as Ungar's International Resilience Project (IRP), an 11-country, 14-site exploration into cross-cultural understandings of resilience, changed how resilience was conceptualised and measured (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). This is seen, most notably, in the development of Ungar's Social Ecology of Resilience Theory (2008, 2011). It also spurred the Pathways to Resilience Research Project (led by Ungar, and funded by the Social

Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the International Development Research Centre of Canada, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment in New Zealand). This mixed methods study investigated the pathways youth travel through formal services and informal supports as they navigate complex and challenging contexts. It has paid close attention to how these various resources support youth resilience processes in the culturally diverse contexts of Canada, China, Colombia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and how these processes are impacted by culture. Its findings echo the theme of the 2005 RRC conference: culture is a heavily nuanced construct and begs much greater consideration in investigations of resilience processes.

The complex import of culture to resilience is underscored by the consideration of other researchers. For example, some researchers are increasingly considering how acculturation processes influence the resilience of highly mobile youth in European and American countries (see, for example, Masten, Liebkind, & Hernandez, 2012); and/or how culturally salient values inform (i.e., promote and/or restrain) resilience processes of youth in Afghanistan (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012); and/or the need to account for how African youths' resilience processes are informed by traditional African culture, rather than in ways that echo Eurocentric theories of resilience (Theron, 2012; Theron & Donald, 2013; Theron, Theron, & Malindi, 2013). Other researchers (e.g. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Neblett et al., 2008) have begun to document how cultural practices (such as racial socialisation) support youth resilience in race-conscious contexts such as America.

Despite this mounting interest in the role of culture in resilience processes no book has been published that focuses exclusively on resilience and culture. *Youth Resilience and Culture: Commonalities and Complexities* addresses this gap. It brings together emerging discussions of the ways in which culture shapes resilience, the theories that inform these various studies, and important considerations that should be borne in mind as researchers continue to investigate resilience. The volume is divided into four parts, reflecting these components.

Part I addresses the central constructs underpinning any theorising about resilience and culture, namely resilience, culture, the complexity inherent to each, and how this is magnified when research accounts for both. In **Chap. 1, Margaret Wright and Ann Masten** review the concepts and lexicon central to resilience, outline several models that facilitate investigation of resilience processes, and briefly synthesise what the last five decades of resilience research reveal about why and how some young people adjust well to potentially disruptive circumstances and events. Their authoritative synthesis flags how culture has, traditionally, been given short shrift in investigations of resilience. In **Chap. 2, Linda C. Theron and Linda Liebenberg** review understandings of culture and comment on the variable ways in which macro- and micro-cultural contexts promote cultural guidelines for everyday living. They conclude that classical views of culture have limited utility for explaining the complexity of how culture matters for resilience, and suggest, therefore, that culture be understood as socially-constructed and socially-shared ways-of-being-and -doing. In **Chap. 3, Michael Ungar** challenges simplistic understandings of either culture or resilience, and draws attention to the diversity

of protective processes and positive adaptation. In this process he reviews the seven tensions – highlighted by the initial International Resilience Project (2003–2005) – that continue to be reflected in emerging research findings. He explains that youths need to resolve these tensions in meaningful collaboration with their social ecologies and highlights how dominant culture, and resistance to dominant culture, informs resilience processes in complex ways.

Part II comprises ten chapters that illustrate the many different ways in which culture and resilience processes intertwine to facilitate and/or hinder youths' positive adjustment to a variety of risks (including poverty, sexual abuse, orphan-status, racism, marginalisation, physical disability, violence, etc.). Importantly, these chapters do not report systematic, cross-cultural work which typically aggregates large-scale study results to offer cultural stereotypes that can be widely generalised. Instead, each of these chapters draws on previously documented research, or current/on-going research, to demonstrate which culturally relevant resources (e.g., worldviews, parenting practices), values, and goals impact youths' resilience processes and how this occurs in variable ways. In doing so, these ten chapters show how cultural resources can sometimes be allied to, or obscured by, ethnicity, race, and religion. In short, each of these chapters provides deeper understanding of the unique, and often complex, ways in which micro- and/or macro-cultural influences sculpt resilience processes. It is our hope that these understandings will prompt follow-up, systematic, robust research that tests their generalizability.

Beginning the part with an African focus, **Linda C. Theron and Nareadi Phasha** (Chap. 4) report two instrumental case studies of black South African youths, who were placed at risk by their social ecologies, to illustrate how traditional African culture (i.e., *Ubuntu* values and practices) underscored, but also complicated, their resilience processes. This is followed by **Elias Mpofu, Nancy Ruhode, Magen Mhaka-Mutepfa, James January, and John Mapfumo's** report in Chap. 5 on an exploratory survey with 18 Zimbabwean youth that shows how traditional, extended family systems mostly facilitate resilience processes when Zimbabwean youth are orphaned.

Moving across to the South Pacific, **Jackie Sanders and Robyn Munford** (Chap. 6) report the varied resilience processes of 605 Māori, Pacific and Pākehā youth and explain how these youths' cultural allegiances shape their resilience processes and related outcomes.

Entering the Northern hemisphere**, Guoxiu Tian and Xiying Wang** (Chap. 7) report how the Chinese cultural emphasis on human interrelatedness provided 220 at-risk youths with nuclear and extended family support, as well as support from 'sworn brothers/sisters' and *tongxiang,* that mostly facilitated these youths' resilience processes.

Next, **Linda Liebenberg, Janice Ikeda, and Michele Wood** (Chap. 8) move the focus to North America where they unpack the ways in which the land/place-based culture of the Inuit supports positive outcomes for youth living in remote coastal communities of Labrador within the Land Claim area of the Nunatsiavut Government. In Chap. 9 **Davido Dupree, Tirzah Spencer, and Margaret Beale Spencer** draw on relevant studies of African American youths and integrate

Spencer's (1995) phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST) to illustrate that racial socialisation promotes resilience through positive racial identity and less internalisation of racism. In contrast, **Patrick Russell, Linda Liebenberg, and Michael Ungar** (Chap. 10) explore the ways in which the invisibility created by belonging to dominant cultural groups can hamper the resilience processes of youth, with white youth in Atlantic Canada presented as an example. In Chap. 11**, Elizabeth Moore and Donna Mertens** draw on studies framed by transformative theory (Mertens, 2009) to illustrate how a micro-culture of pride, mentorship, and advocacy along with a macro-culture that advocates for inclusive, quality education for the Deaf, supports resilience processes in Deaf American youth in general, and Deaf American youth of colour in particular. **Shelly Whitman and Linda Liebenberg** (Chap. 12) then explore the ways in which conflicting cultures can both undermine and promote the adaptive processes of former child soldiers moving as refugees from conflict-contexts in sub-Saharan Africa to new homes in a Canadian context, echoing many of the themes highlighted in Chap. 4.

Bringing the part to a close, with continued attention to the complexity of cultural influences, **Wendy Kliewer and Roberto Meijia** (Chap. 13) report a mixed methods study with 310 Colombian youth living in the city of Itagui to document how a culture of violence and the culture of specific *comunas* both supported and obstructed resilience processes.

Part III foregrounds the methodological complexities of researching how resilience and culture interlink, and how this impacts the ways in which youth respond to circumstances and events that threaten their wellbeing in ways that promote positive outcomes. To this end, in Chap. 14, **Jia He and Fons Van de Vijver** use their extensive knowledge of quantitative cross-cultural methods to review construct, method, and item bias that are potentiated in resilience research across multiple cultures, and the corresponding levels of equivalence in cross-cultural comparisons. Using examples from relevant studies, they overview the approaches developed in quantitative studies and how these apply to qualitative studies, before commenting on how best to combine qualitative and quantitative evidence in the study of resilience and culture. **Linda Liebenberg and Linda C. Theron** (Chap. 15) then argue for greater critical consideration when integrating innovative methodologies into resilience-focused qualitative research. In particular, they make a case for culturally-sensitive choices of inventive, qualitative approaches. Using examples from the Pathways to Resilience study, they highlight the value of culturally-congruent, visual, participatory approaches to access the taken-for-granted in person-environment interactions, and the ways in which this enhances understanding of how culture shapes resilience processes. **"Lali" McCubbin and Jennifer Moniz** (Chap. 16) round this part on research off by drawing attention to the criticality of the ethical principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility in studies that explore resilience, particularly when researchers and participants do not share cultural roots, and/or when resilience studies are conducted in marginalised communities. They conclude that in the absence of respectful, relevant, reciprocal, and responsible research, studies will yield

superficial and/or inaccurate understandings of how culture sways resilience, potentially furthering the marginalising effects of oppressive structures.

Part IV consists of a single, compelling chapter authored by **Catherine Panter-Brick**. In this concluding chapter, Catherine flags the dangers of researching how culture impacts resilience in simplistic, reductionist, or categorical ways. She urges future, methodologically robust, multi-systems research that takes a 'fine-grained' approach to culture, especially if resilience is to be understood as a complex, normative concept, and if the differential nature of functional outcomes, and the pathways to them, are to be meaningfully grasped. Importantly, naive or romanticized interpretations of the ways in which culture impacts resilience are derided. Accordingly, the concluding chapter underscores the way in which this collection provides an opportunity to pause and take stock of the progress, or lack thereof, made in explorations of how culture informs resilience. Importantly, while this chapter brings the volume to a summative close, it also points the way forward for future research efforts, thereby positioning this publication as a stepping stone on the path to systematically explaining why and how culture shapes resilience processes.

In summary, this book does not offer exhaustive explanations or illustrations of how culture and resilience processes interact to facilitate positive outcomes (or not). For example, no chapter explicitly addresses how youth, who are confronted by several contrasting and/or shifting cultural paradigms, navigate and negotiate such realities. Nor does any chapter speak of youth resistance to dominant or disruptive cultures and how such resistance informs resilience processes. Likewise, comment on gene X culture interactions is absent. Nevertheless, *Youth Resilience and Culture: Commonalities and Complexities* is a first and important step to sensitising researchers and practitioners in the field of resilience to the magnitude of culture in explanations of resilience processes and subsequent translation of such understandings into culturally-congruent interventions. In short, the central message of this book is that non-stereotypical, critical appreciation of the culture, and often conflicting systems in which youth find themselves, and those with which they affiliate, is pivotal to comprehending why particular resilience processes matter for particular youth in a particular life-world at a particular point in time. Grasping such particularity demands on-going, sensitive research into why and how culture matters for resilience.

Vanderbijlpark, South Africa L. C. Theron
Halifax, NS, Canada L. Liebenberg
Halifax, NS, Canada M. Ungar

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About the Editors and Contributors

Editors

Linda Theron D.Ed. (Educational Psychology), is professor in the Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, South Africa. Her research explores why, and how, some South African youth adjust well to poverty, orphanhood, and/or learning difficulties, and how sociocultural contexts shape these processes of resilience (see www.Lindatheron.org/www.optentia.co.za). She has published and presented internationally on related themes. In 2013, she received the Education Association of South Africa's research medal for her rich contributions to understanding, and promoting, resilience processes that support the positive adjustment of South African youth.

Linda Liebenberg D.Phil. is Co-Director of the Resilience Research Centre, and Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Dalhousie University. Her work focuses on the use of elicitation methods and mixed-methods designs in understanding the lives of children and youth living in challenging contexts, with a focus on resilience processes. Her work also includes the design of measurement instruments used with children and youth (see www.Lindaliebenberg.com/www.resilienceresearch.org). She has published and presented internationally on resilience related themes relevant to the understanding of youth across cultures and contexts. Her publications include the two co-edited volumes (with Michael Ungar, Ph.D.) *Researching Resilience* and *Resilience in Action*.

Michael Ungar Ph.D. is both a family therapist and a Professor of Social Work at Dalhousie University where he is the founder and Co-Director of the Resilience Research Centre that coordinates more than five million dollars in funded research in a dozen countries. He has published over 100 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on the topic of resilience and its application to clinical practice, and is the author of 11 books including *The Social Ecology of Resilience: A Handbook for Theory and Practice*. In 2012, he was the recipient of the 2012 Canadian Association of Social Workers National Distinguished Service Award.

Contributors

Davido Dupree Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the Community College of Philadelphia and an adjunct faculty member in the Applied Psychology and Human Development program in the Graduate School of Education of the University of Pennsylvania. His research investigates the effects of exposure to violence and racial identity status on the cognitive functioning of African American adolescents, and evaluates interventions designed to address social issues (e.g., community violence and disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system).

Jia He is a Ph.D. researcher in Tilburg University, the Netherlands. Her current research includes the psychological meaning of survey response styles, values, social desirability, and other methodological aspects of cross-cultural studies. She is also interested in modern research methods such as structural equation modeling and multilevel analysis.

Janice Ikeda MSW is the Project Manager of Evaluations at the Resilience Research Centre.

James January M.Sc. is a Lecturer in Community Medicine at the University of Zimbabwe. His research focuses on indigenous mental health systems of care and support in contexts of socio-economic vulnerability.

Wendy Kliewer Ph.D., Professor and Chair of the psychology department at Virginia Commonwealth University, is a stress and coping researcher with developmental and prevention interests. Her research focuses on understanding risk and resilience in youth and families in the United States, South America, and most recently South Africa. She is particularly interested in the role of the family in mitigating, or alternatively exacerbating, youth's risk for negative outcomes in the face of stressful life circumstances.

John Mapfumo M.Sc. is a Lecturer in Education at Africa University. His primary research interest is on livelihoods and social supports within contexts of orphanhood and disadvantage.

Ann Masten Ph.D. is the Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Development at the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on understanding processes that promote competence and prevent problems in human development, with a focus on adaptive processes and resilience in the context of high cumulative risk, adversity, and trauma. She is Past-President of the Society for Research in Child Development, member of the Board of Children, Youth and Families, Institute of Medicine, and 2014 recipient of the Urie Bronfenbrenner Award for Lifetime Contributions to Developmental Psychology in the Service of Science and Society from the American Psychological Association.

Laurie "Lali" McCubbin Ph.D. is an indigenous scholar (Native Hawaiian) and Associate Professor in Counseling Psychology at Washington State University. Her research focuses on resilience and adaptation among indigenous peoples and people of colour, cultural identity development, and stress and coping processes among multiracial families. She is currently the Co-Director of the Northwest Pacific Center of Mestizo and Indigenous Research and Engagement. She is also the Executive Director of the Resilience and Well-Being Project.

Roberto Mejia Ph.D. is a contractor at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an adjunct faculty member in the Hubert Department of Global Health at Emory University, and consultant at the Center for Excellence on Research in Mental Health, CES University, School of Medicine, Medellin, Colombia. He has conducted research in a variety of epidemiological and public health priority areas both in the United States and Latin America.

Donna M. Mertens Ph.D. was a Professor in the Department of Education at Gallaudet University and serves as the editor for the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. The primary focus of her work is transformative mixed-methods inquiry in diverse communities that prioritizes human rights and social justice. Her recent books include: *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology*; *Program Evaluation Theory and Practice: A Comprehensive Guide*; and *Transformative Research and Evaluation.*

Magen Mhaka-Mutepfa M.Sc. is a student counselling services specialist at the University of Zimbabwe and doctoral student in public health with the University of Sydney, Australia. Her research focuses on social aspects of HIV prevention with teenagers, and the wellbeing of grandparents who care for children with orphanhood.

Jennifer Moniz M.S. is a counselling psychology doctoral student at Washington State University. Her research interests are multiracial/multiethnic individuals and resilience.

Elizabeth A. Moore Ph.D. is currently MSW Program Director and Associate Professor at Gallaudet University Department of Social Work. She has been an active advocate in the deaf community and is currently a member of National Black Deaf Advocates, Inc., DC Area Black Deaf Advocates, Inc., and National Association of the Deaf.

Elias Mpofu Ph.D., D.Ed., is Professor and Head of Discipline of Rehabilitation Counseling at the University of Sydney, Australia. His research focuses on community-oriented health interventions for health promotion and understanding social influences on health in culturally diverse communities. This line of inquiry also considered influences of orphanhood and church affiliation on sexual decisions by girls with orphanhood.

Robyn Munford Ph.D. is the Director of the Research and Practice Development Hub and Professor in the School of Health and Social Services at Massey University, New Zealand. She co-leads Pathways to Resilience and Successful Youth Transitions which examine patterns of risk and resilience in the lives of vulnerable youth and the ways in which formal and informal systems of support facilitate development. Findings from these projects are translated into practice via her active networking with youth-focused statutory and NGO organisations.

Catherine Panter-Brick is Professor of Anthropology, Health, and Global Affairs at Yale University. Her research focuses on resilience, culture, and health in humanitarian settings. She has worked with war-affected children in Afghanistan, refugees in Pakistan, homeless street-children in Nepal, and famine-stricken families in Niger. For her work in conflict areas, she was awarded the Lucy Mair Medal that honours excellence in the application of anthropology to the relief of distress and the recognition of human dignity.

Nareadi Phasha Ph.D. is Professor and Chair of Department of Inclusive Education at the University of South Africa. Her research focuses on sexual abuse/violence in the community and schools and how this impacts school functioning. Currently, she is the principal investigator in the Gender-based Violence at Schools for Learners with Special Needs Project in South Africa and Kenya.

Nancy Ruhode M.Sc. is a Lecturer at the Women's University of Africa. Her research interests are in HIV&AIDS prevention, care and support, HIV and gender, and sexual reproductive health.

Patrick Russell M.A. is Evaluation Lead, North Region, for the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's (CAMH) Systems Improvement through Service Collaboration (SISC).

Jackie Sanders Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the School of Health and Social Services at Massey University, New Zealand. She co-leads Pathways to Resilience and Successful Youth Transitions which examine patterns of risk and resilience in the lives of vulnerable youth, and the ways in which formal and informal systems of support facilitate development. Findings are translated into practice via her active networking with youth-focused statutory and NGO organisations.

Margaret Beale Spencer Ph.D. is the Marshall Field IV Professor of Urban Education in the Department of Comparative Human Development, and Professor in the Committee on Education and the College at the University of Chicago. Her basic research, theory development, evaluation efforts and collaborative applications are vulnerability and resilience focused.

Tirzah R. Spencer Ph.D. is a Senior Scientist at Nemours Health and Prevention Services. Dr. Spencer conducts translational research emphasising cultural, contextual, and developmentally specific strategies for improving health outcomes among youth.

Guoxiu Tian Ph.D. is a Professor in the School of Politics and Law at Capital Normal University, Beijing. Her major research interests include school-focused social work, youth studies, positive psychology, resilience, and family education.

Yolanda Torres MPH, Dr. H.C is a Distinguished Professor in Epidemiology and the Director of the Center for Excellence on Research in Mental Health (CESISM), CES University, Medellin, Colombia. Dr. Torres has more than 30 years' experience conducting research in mental health with particular interest in the epidemiology of alcohol and substance use in Colombia.

Fons van de Vijver Ph.D. is Professor of Cross-Cultural Psychology. He has (co-) authored 400 publications, mainly about bias and equivalence, psychological acculturation and multiculturalism, cognitive similarities and differences, response styles, translations and adaptations. He is the former editor of the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* and President of the European Association of Psychological Assessment and President-Elect of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology. In 2013 he received the International Award of the American Psychological Association (for his contributions to international cooperation and to the advancement of knowledge of psychology).

Xiying Wang Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Development and Public Policy at Beijing Normal University. Her major research interests include gender studies, feminist theory and human sexualities, gender-based violence, resilience, and HIV/AIDS.

Shelly Whitman is the Executive Director of the Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative and an Adjunct Professor in Political Science at Dalhousie University.

Michele Wood holds a master's degree in Information Management from Dalhousie University, and is a Researcher/Evaluator for the Nunatsiavut Government, Department of Health and Social Development, within the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. She addresses issues impacting community wellness for the Inuit communities of this region, and champions research which focuses on the involvement of communities in participatory research, knowledge transfer and implementation processes.

Margaret O'Dougherty Wright Ph.D. is a Professor of Psychology at Miami University. Her research focuses on the long-term consequences of interpersonal trauma, particularly trauma emanating from within the family. She is interested in

understanding what promotes positive resolution of abuse experiences as well as factors that lead to continued vulnerability. She is on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Family Violence*, *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, and the *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, and Trauma* and served as the Director of Clinical Training at Miami University from 2009 to 2012.

Part I
The Complex Interactions of Resilience and Culture

Chapter 1
Pathways to Resilience in Context

Margaret O'Dougherty Wright and Ann S. Masten

Following their parents' contentious divorce, a 3 year old African American girl and her 4 year old brother traveled alone by train to live with their paternal grandmother in Arkansas. Four years later their father arrived without warning and moved the children to live with their biological mother, who now resided in Missouri. At the age of eight, the child was brutally raped by her mother's boyfriend. He was soon murdered, most likely by the child's uncles. In the aftermath of this trauma, the child became mute for almost 5 years and was sent back to live with her grandmother. Following recovery of her speech, she was sent again to live with her mother, who now resided in California. By age 17 she had become pregnant, and began a precipitous slide into poverty and criminal activities, while also working as a cook and waitress to provide for her young son. As a young adult, she struggled to raise her son without training or an advanced education. Given her exposure to a multitude of psychosocial risks and struggles to adapt during her early life, one would not have predicted that she would someday become a world-renowned writer, poet, performer, and influential voice in the American Civil Rights Movement. This is the early life story of Maya Angelou.

Angelou's memoirs provide rich insights into factors that may have facilitated her recovery and remarkable turnaround later in life (Angelou, 1970, 1974, 1981). She credits a teacher with helping her to speak again, igniting her extraordinary love for books, and encouraging her to observe and write about the world around her. Other salient compensatory and protective factors that stand out in her memoirs are the steady presence and guidance of her grandmother who provided financial stability during economically perilous times and modeled incredible strength of character and resolve in dealing with numerous experiences with racism and

M.O. Wright (✉)
Department of Psychology, Miami University, Oxford, OH, USA
e-mail: wrightmo@miamioh.edu

A.S. Masten
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, USA

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discrimination. The love of her brother, vitality and support of her mother, and opportunities within the African American community to participate actively in the struggle for civil rights likely fostered her resilience as well. And, of course, Angelou also brought to these interactions the power of intellect, creativity, performing skills, a vibrant personality, and indomitable spirit.

Compelling case histories of resilience, like that of Angelou and many others, have inspired pioneering research to understand the processes that account for the capacity to recover and thrive following extremely difficult life circumstances. When researchers began to follow "at risk" children into adolescence and adulthood, they observed dramatic variations in adjustment, including cases of unexpectedly consistent positive development, or, as in the example of Maya Angelou, evidence for dramatic turnarounds later in life. Early groundbreaking studies of children facing a variety of stressful life events and psychosocial adversities (Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984; Murphy & Moriarty, 1976; Rutter, 1987; Werner & Smith, 1982) led to decades of research as investigators across the globe set out to understand the phenomenon of resilience in diverse contexts. Theory and research on the role of culture in resilience was neglected in the early decades, but now is burgeoning (Masten, 2014b; Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013; Ungar, Ghazinour, & Richter, 2013).

In this chapter, we overview key resilience concepts and terminology, delineate various models examining resilience processes, and highlight very briefly what has been learned over the past half century about pathways to resilience. Resilience is conceptualized within a dynamic, embedded, ecological systems framework, encompassing interactions across multiple levels, from the level of genes to person, family, community, and cultural group (Cicchetti, 2013; Wright, Masten, & Narayan, 2013).

1.1 What Is Resilience?

The terms 'resilience' or 'resilient' are now widely recognized and familiar to many in the lay public. These terms are often used by doctors, therapists, policy makers, teachers, academics, and the popular press to refer to individuals who "bounce back" after significant stress and adversity. Despite its popularity, however, the "deceptively simple construct of resilience" (Kaplan, 2005, p. 39) has been the topic of many definitional debates and its utility as an explanatory construct has been questioned. Resilience derives from the Latin verb 'resilire', meaning to leap or spring back; to rebound, recoil. It was first introduced into the scholarly literature in 1818, when Thomas Tredgold used the term to describe a property of timber, and to explain why some types of wood were able to accommodate a sudden and severe load without breaking (cited in McAslan, 2010). Forty years later, Mallet (cited in McAslan, 2010) developed a way to measure the 'modulus of resilience' to assess the ability of materials to withstand severe conditions. After many years of productive usage in engineering and physics, the term was adopted by ecologists and

developmental scientists as a metaphor for the capacity of a dynamic system (e.g., a rain forest, a family, a community) to respond to challenges and threats, survive, and continue to prosper (Gunderson & Holling, 2002; Masten & Obradović, 2008).

1.2 Key Concepts and Terminology

Although definitional issues continue to be the subject of some debate, there is broad consensus on key concepts. (Masten, 2014b, p. 10) has defined *resilience* as "The capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability, or development". This definition is intentionally broad and scalable across system levels and disciplines. However, it requires further delineation in the context of application, to define the meaning of "capacity" or "adapt successfully" or "significant challenges." Research on resilience requires conceptual and operational definitions of these components, and culture plays many roles in how resilience is defined.

Definitions of resilience always consider both the nature of the threat to adaptation and the quality of adaptation following threat exposure. Threats to adaptation are typically conceptualized by a variety of terms such as *risk, adversity*, and *stressful life events*. Positive adaptation is also defined and assessed in a variety of ways, including absence of psychopathology, success in age-salient *developmental tasks*, subjective well-being, and relational *competence* (see Table 1.1 for our definition of key terms).

It is critical to remember that risk is a probabilistic term. It signifies an elevated probability of a negative outcome for members of a designated risk group, but it does not indicate the precise nature of the threat to an individual or differentiate which individuals in the risk group will demonstrate a negative outcome. Risk is often multifaceted and risk factors frequently co-occur in the lives of individuals. As a result, investigators often have focused on assessments of *cumulative risk* (Evans, Li, & Sepanski Whipple, 2013; Obradović, Shaffer, & Masten, 2012). Risk categories, such as "parents divorced," include children with widely varying experiences of pre- and post-divorce interparental conflict, family violence, economic strain, and life disruptions known to affect the well-being of children. At the same time, individual children experience even the same events differently as a function of their age, gender, development, and many other individual differences in biological, psychological, and social function. A closer analysis of divorce effects often reveals that consideration of cumulative risk, together with individual differences, provides clearer insights into the processes impacting long term adjustment among children of divorced parents (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999; Kelly & Emery, 2003).

There is now a substantial body of research documenting that outcomes generally worsen, and resilience becomes less likely, as risk factors pile up and persist (Evans et al., 2013; Obradović et al., 2012). As a result, contemporary resilience research usually considers risk from a cumulative and contextual perspective,

Table 1.1 Definition of key terms

Resilience: The capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to significant disturbances and continue or recover to healthy function or development.
Risk Factor: A variable associated with an elevated probability of a negative outcome for a group of individuals
Cumulative Risk: The summation of all risk factors that the individual has experienced or an index of the overall severity of adversity experienced; this can include multiple separate risk events or repeated occurrences of the same risk factor
Stress: The condition or experience of an imbalance in demands impinging on a person and the actual or perceived resources available to meet those challenges, disrupting the quality of functioning at some level
Stressful or adverse life events or conditions: Experiences that typically lead to stress responses in individuals
Adversity: Stressful life experiences that threaten adaptation or development
Promotive Factors (assets, resources): Measurable characteristics of individuals associated with better adaptation (for a designated outcome) in both high and low risk conditions; variables with equally beneficial effects regardless of risk level; correlates of positive adaptation
Protective Factors: Measurable characteristics of individuals associated with positive outcomes particularly in the context of high risk or adversity; a favorable moderator of risk or adversity
Cumulative Protection: The presence of multiple protective factors or influences in an individual's life
Differential susceptibility (sensitivity to context): Individual differences in reactivity or sensitivity to experience, associated with moderating effects of experience on individual function or development; such moderators may be associated with good reactions to positive environments and poor responses to negative environments
Developmental Tasks: Psychosocial milestones or accomplishments expected of members in a given society or culture in different age periods; these milestones often represent criteria by which individual development can be evaluated within the culture
Competence: The adaptive use of personal or contextual resources to attain age-appropriate developmental tasks

acknowledging that there will be dose-response gradients that reflect multiple risks piling up in the lives of individuals. For example, greater risk is presumably posed to individuals who experience an acute new adversity in the midst of ongoing poverty, war, or maltreatment than there would be for a similar, but isolated, acute adverse experience (Masten & Narayan, 2012). Past research on risk gradients has provided ample documentation of the adaptive difficulties that ensue with exposure to increasing levels of stress and cumulative risk exposure (Adler & Ostrove, 1999; Cicchetti, Rogosch, Lynch, & Holt, 1993; Pine, Costello, & Masten, 2005). Finally, it should also be noted that typically as risk gradients rise, assets and/or resources decline. This reflects the fact that risk factors and resources are often inversely related to each other and in some cases (e.g., low and high SES, poor and effective parenting) reflect opposite ends of the same continuum.

Positive adaptation can be defined at the level of the individual, family, community or other systems. In research on individual human resilience, the criteria for evaluating positive adaptation are often based on normative expectations for behavior or development in the context of age, culture, community, society, and

history. These expectations are often called developmental tasks (McCormick, Kuo, & Masten, 2011; Wright et al., 2013). Some developmental tasks, such as learning to walk or talk or care for children, are universal; some are common in contemporary societies, such as attending school and learning to read; and others vary by geography or culture, such as learning to fish or meditate or perform traditional songs or dances. Sometimes adaptive success is defined negatively, in terms of the absence of problems, but that is usually in the context of research on risk for particular disorders or symptoms, when the goal of the research is preventing the problem.

Issues regarding defining and measuring the criteria for successful adaptation in research on resilience have received considerable attention in resilience science over the years. Different decisions about criteria and measures made it difficult to compare findings in systematic meta-analytic studies, while at the same time diverse studies often revealed similar conclusions about important predictors of resilience.

As studies of resilience spread across cultures and situations, the complexity of defining positive adaptation became more evident. Studies of acculturation highlighted differences in the developmental task expectations for young immigrants navigating sometimes conflicting expectations at home and at school (see Masten, Liebkind, & Hernandez, 2012, and Telzer & Fuligni, 2009). Efforts to apply measures developed in one cultural context to study adaptive behavior in a very different context proved inappropriate or invalid in many instances, while developing new, context-specific measures was a daunting task. Qualitative studies in different cultures expanded and enriched the scope of possible criteria, while also posing more challenges for cross-contextual research (see Ungar, 2012). Some situations also challenged the meaning of successful adaptation, such as when youth voluntarily become involved in popular uprisings against perceived oppression in areas of prolonged political conflict (see Barber, 2009).

The "capacity for adapting" is typically described in terms of general resources associated with positive adaptation under most circumstances (also called assets and promotive influences) and protective factors or processes, which refer to adaptive capacities that play a special role when risk or adversity is high (Masten, 2014b; Wright et al., 2013). Resilience investigators were searching for understanding of "what makes a difference?" to account for the striking variability in adaptive outcomes among individuals confronting what seemed to be similar adversities. Many of the factors widely associated with resilience in children, for example, were well-established predictors of success in multiple domains of child development at any level of risk, such as good cognitive skills and effective parents. But evidence also accrued that there were some factors that played a larger role when the level of threat was high and others that only mattered in particular emergencies, like an automobile airbag, the fire department, or specific antibodies. Parents could play both kinds of roles, normal caregiver and emergency responder. It also became clear that the same attribute of a child or environment could function as protective in one regard and a liability in another situation. A highly inhibited child, for example, might be more susceptible to social stressors and anxiety

responses but protected from getting into dangerous situations and responding with aggression. More recently, there is growing attention to individual differences in sensitivity to experience that result in better adaptation in favorable environments and worse adaptation in unfavorable environments (Belsky & Pluess, 2009; Boyce & Ellis, 2005). These person-in-context effects are discussed further below.

Promotive and protective influences are not always well-differentiated for methodological reasons. When only a high-risk sample is studied, for example, it is not clear whether the correlates of resilience are promotive or protective influences, or both. Ignoring the distinction in order to summarize findings in the literature over the years, reviewers have observed remarkable consistency in the correlates or predictors of positive adaptation, defined in a variety of ways, under diverse conditions of adversity, also defined in a variety of ways (e.g., Luthar, 2006; Wright et al., 2013). Masten (2001, 2004) described the commonly observed correlates of resilience for young people as "the short list," positing that these frequently reported factors linked to resilience (e.g., good cognitive abilities, a close relationship to sensitive and responsive caregivers, socioeconomic advantages, and effective schools) represent fundamental adaptive systems both within and outside the individual. These systems reflect both biological and sociocultural evolutionary processes that support human development under many conditions. One of the lessons learned from this body of research is that most individuals who manifest resilience do not possess mysterious, unique, or exclusive qualities. Rather, they have been able to draw from common resources of adaptive capacity, within the person, their relationships, and their connections to other systems. Table 1.2 highlights some of these bio-psycho-social-cultural adaptive systems and processes.

As the definition of resilience became more systems oriented and consequently, more dynamic, the capacity for resilience also was conceptualized in terms of interacting systems, congruent with relational developmental systems theory (Overton, 2013; Zelazo, 2013). In dynamic, open systems, the behavior of the individual system is influenced by many interactions inside the individual system and with other systems. As a result, human individual adaptation and development emerges from the interplay of many systems and the capacity for adaptive responses to a challenge will also depend on other systems. In other words, human capacity for adaptive responses to challenges is distributed across interacting systems, including adaptive systems within the person and embedded in relationships and connections to other systems, in the family, community, and culture (Masten, 2014b).

Table 1.2 Examples of bio-psycho-social-cultural systems and processes potentially implicated in fostering resilience for children and families

Within the individual
Genetic moderators and epigenetic processes
Positive physical health and immune function
Adaptive self-regulation system (physiological, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral)
Adequacy of stress response systems
Strong cognitive and problem-solving abilities
Agency and an effective mastery motivation system
Adaptive temperament and personality
Within the family
Close attachment relationships
Positive extended family and kinship ties
Cohesiveness, structure, and support within the family
Effectiveness of parenting in the cultural context
Family rituals, values, and beliefs
Financial stability
Within the community
Safety of the physical environment
Affordable housing
Effective education system
Peer friendships with positive values and norms
Presence of religious and spiritual communities
Good public health care and social services
Employment opportunities
Adequate access to emergency (police, fire, medical) and legal services
Access to recreational facilities
Within the culture and society
Belief systems that give life meaning and purpose
Protective child policies (child labor, child health and welfare policies)
Socioeconomic policies and health of local and national economy
Availability and adequacy of emergency response systems
Access to material resources
Human rights; Adequacy of general laws and legal systems for protection of citizens
Prevention of and protection from oppression and political violence
Global relationships with international community
Peaceful political situation and some degree of national security

1.3 Key Issue: Is Resilience an Individual Trait or a Dynamic Multi-determined Process?

One area of enduring debate in resilience theory over the years was whether resilience should be viewed as a trait or as a dynamic process (Bonanno & Diminich, 2013; Luthar, 2006; Masten, 2013; Rutter, 1979). This controversy

stemmed in part from the challenge of judging the status of a dynamic developing system in a meaningful way with respect to a specific point in time. Curtis and Cicchetti (2003) argued persuasively that a living system, by its very nature, is characterized by "dynamic process that is influenced by neural and psychological self-organization, as well as transactions between the ecological context and the developing organism" (p. 776).

The focus on resilience as a trait has been more common in adult than child literature, where resilience has sometimes been characterized as a personality characteristic that offers protection against life stress and adversity. However, there is little evidence to support a singular, broad trait of resilience and a considerable downside to this notion (Masten, 2013, 2014b; Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013; Wright et al., 2013). Many individual and contextual factors have been linked to resilience and, as noted above, the same characteristic can pose as vulnerability in one context and protection in a different context. Moreover, many of the processes associated with resilience (like a close relationship or community support) are not "in" the person. The notion of resilience as a trait also carries a high risk of blaming the victim when an individual does not manifest resilience in a difficult situation. As Garbarino remarked, following decades of research with high risk inner city youth: "Being unable to protect oneself against the accumulation of risk factors does not constitute moral turpitude. Some environments are too much for anyone" (2005, p. xiii). We need to be vigilant in guarding against such judgments. Even characteristics commonly linked to resilience (e.g., good problem-solving skills) do not provide absolute buffers to stressful life events; there are situations so hostile and threatening, such as prolonged deprivation and maltreatment, that no child would be expected to develop well (Cicchetti, 2013).

Developmental scholars have described resilience in terms of adaptive, developmental process promoting positive adjustment (e.g., Egeland, Carlson, & Sroufe, 1993). In a dynamic, systems model of development, all adaptive behavior and development itself arise from continual interactions of systems within the individual and also the interaction of the individual with the environment, including other people and other systems (e.g., physical ecology, educational systems, and employment resources). Given the interplay among many embedded, interacting systems in contributing to the adaptation of individuals, it may be most accurate to say that resilience involves many processes and the capacity for resilience is distributed across interacting systems (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 provides an overview of some of the many bio-psycho-social-cultural systems and processes potentially implicated in fostering resilience. To illustrate, the capacity of a child to deal with adversity is likely to depend on the child's own capabilities for regulating emotion and stress, the child's cognitive abilities, the capabilities of an effective caregiver watching out for the child, and resources available to the child directly or indirectly through the family or the community and culture. How well the caregiver handles the situation is likely to depend on how well the family is functioning and supports available to the family, including routine and emergency services in the community, and cultural beliefs and practices. Families and communities transmit cultural practices that may promote

resilience in children in addition to providing support during times of needs. Both the social and the physical ecologies of child development contribute to resilience (Wachs & Rahman, 2013).

An individual's adaptation is also dynamic and can change over time. Consequently, the same individual may show maladaptive functioning at one point in time and resilience later in development or vice versa, depending on recent exposure to stress and the broader context of resources in his or her life. An individual person might also be resilient with respect to some kinds of stressors and not others, and a person might be resilient with respect to some adaptive outcomes, but not others (e.g., work competence but not relational competence) (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Masten & Wright, 2010; Rutter, 2007). Such complexity highlights the importance of adopting an ecological, transactional approach to understanding resilience (Cicchetti, 2013; Cowen & Durlak, 2000; Ungar, 2012; Ungar et al., 2013). Research informed by a transactional perspective underscores the importance of studying processes across multiple interconnected bio-psycho-social-cultural domains that can change over time, with changes in one domain of functioning potentially cascading to affect other domains (Masten & Cicchetti, 2010). Since adversity, challenges, and opportunities can occur at any point in development, with consequences that potentially alter development over the immediate and/or the long term, a lifespan developmental perspective is essential for a full understanding of resilience.

1.4 Models of Resilience

Three types of resilience models are discussed here: person-focused, variable-focused, and hybrid models. These models guided the strategies for assessment and analyses that operationalized and tested ideas about the connections among risks, adaptive function, and other factors that might play a role in resilience.

1.4.1 Person-Focused Models

Person-focused models, initially inspired by compelling case studies, have the individual person as their primary focus of analysis. There are a variety of different person-focused approaches, including qualitative and quantitative approaches which differ in their emphasis on inductive versus deductive reasoning, respectively. Quantitative research focuses specifically on a context of validation whereas qualitative research focuses on a context of discovery (Sullivan, 1998). In variable-based quantitative research, there is a tendency to generalize from aggregate group data to individual cases, converting the numbers into a narrative to explain how a developmental process occurs. In contrast, qualitative methods work directly from narratives and are better able to preserve the specific meanings that an individual

attributes to his or her experiences and actions. Thus, qualitative methods are particularly well-suited to discovering and understanding the subjective experience of individuals encountering highly stressful life conditions and capturing the complexity of their social context (Sullivan, 1998; Wright, Fopma-Loy, & Oberle, 2012).

Quantitative studies have two basic forms. One approach involves classification of high-risk individuals into groups according to the quality of their adaptation, followed by comparisons on variables that may account for the differences in outcome. A classic example is provided by widely-cited findings from the Kauai study by Werner and Smith (1982, 1992, 2001). These investigators identified a subgroup of resilient young people and compared them to their less successful high-risk peers of similar background. This type of model classifies individuals as either resilient or not and subsequent analyses attempt to determine the moderating and mediating factors that differentiate these groups of individuals. This model has been extended to include comparisons across four groups differing in exposure to risk, including a resilient subgroup (high risk, high adaptation), a vulnerable group (high risk, low adaptation), a competent low risk group (high adaptation, minimal exposure to risk or adversity) and a maladaptive subgroup that has not been exposed to a high level of risk and is functioning poorly. Research utilizing all four groups has typically reported a lower frequency of people in the low-risk maladaptive category, reflecting perhaps the overall bias in human development towards adaptive outcomes and/or the exclusion of some highly vulnerable participants from participation in research studies (Masten et al., 1999).

Recent person-focused approaches have utilized latent growth modeling in an effort to explore resilient pathways over time. These models will be discussed subsequently as hybrid models because of their ability to capture both the variability in individual growth curves over time as well as between-person and between-group differences in developmental trajectories.

1.4.2 Variable-Focused Models: Testing Promotive, Protective, Mediating, and Preventive Effects

In variable-focused models, multivariate statistics are employed to test different kinds of effects, representing hypotheses about the ways in which risks, resources, and potential mediators or moderators of risk may contribute to adaptive outcomes. The statistical tests, in effect, are evaluating the likelihood of a functional relation among the variables, although causal effects cannot be determined. Direct effects of a variable on an outcome, reflecting main effects, suggest factors that may function as risk or promotive factors. Some variables (e.g., maltreatment) have generally negative consequences (defining a risk factor or adversity) and some variables (e.g., a good sense of humor) have generally positive consequences. Many other

variables reflect a bidirectional continuum that is generally related to adjustment (e.g., quality of parenting or intellectual ability).

It is also possible to test for mediating effects of adversity or risk on some outcomes via an indirect effect of the purported mediator. A classic example is the hypothesis that adversity harms children by undermining the quality of parenting available. Economic strain, for example, affects the parents (e.g., they become depressed or fight more with each other), which in turn degrades the quality of their parenting, which then affects the child. Conger and colleagues (Conger & Conger, 2002; Conger, Rueter, & Conger, 2000) have tested this kind of indirect effect in their family stress model, showing for example, that the Iowa farm crisis may have had such effects on adolescents, mediated by parenting quality.

Investigators often test moderating effects as well, where a potential moderator is believed to alter the possible impact of risk or adversity on the outcome of interest. Statistically, these effects reflect significant interactions of the risk variable with the moderating variable in predicting the outcome of interest. Moderating effects have been described in terms of protective effects, vulnerability, and differential susceptibility or sensitivity to context. These distinctions reflect judgments about the nature of the effects in relation to what is normative or expected at a given level of adversity and the nature of the moderating variable (see Masten, 2013). Protective factors are associated with better than expected outcomes at high levels of risk and vulnerability factors are associated with worse than expected outcomes under high risk conditions. Sometimes the same variable can function as a promotive and protective factor, as noted above. In this case, a main effect and an interaction effect would be expected. Differential susceptibility, or sensitivity to context effects, discussed above and also below in the next section reflect a different kind of moderator. When risk is high, this kind of moderating variable shows a vulnerability pattern, but when risk is low (the context is favorable), the same variable shows a promotive pattern. In other words, the effect depends on the context.

Recently there has been great interest in models that examine differential reactivity to context. These models explore the possibility that some children are more reactive than others to both negative (risk-promoting) and positive (development-enhancing) environmental conditions. This enhanced sensitivity increases developmental responsivity or reactivity to the environment (Belsky, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & van IJzendoorn, 2007; Belsky & Pluess, 2009; Boyce & Ellis, 2005; Ellis & Boyce, 2011). That is, the particular characteristics of a child that might make him or her disproportionately vulnerable to stress might also make the child more likely to benefit from contextual support and resources (e.g., responsive to protective factors). As so aptly put in the title of the seminal article by Belsky and colleagues (2007, p. 300), the influence of a differential susceptibility variable depends on the context, "for better or for worse." This concept underscores a point made early in the resilience field that it is the function of an attribute in a given context that matters, which can vary depending on the situation (Rutter, 1987; Masten, 2013). For example, infant and toddler negative emotionality and difficult temperament have been explored as potential differential

susceptibility factors. Supporting this hypothesis, Pluess and Belsky (2009) found that children with difficult temperaments displayed more behavioral problems when raised in low quality environments, but fewer behavior problems when the quality of the rearing environment was high than did children with easy temperaments, who did not differ as dramatically based on the rearing environment. The findings in this area highlight the importance of examining not only the person but also the context to understand what leads to both vulnerability and resilience.

Transactional and cascade models reflect another variation on variable-focused models that have received considerable attention in recent years. These models often apply structural equation modeling or path analysis to test more complex patterns of interaction over time among multiple latent constructs or measured variables. In a seminal 1968 review, Bell drew attention to bidirectional effects, highlighting the importance of reciprocal influences in parent-child and other social relationships. His review highlighted that children were not passive recipients of their parents' socialization practices, but rather played an active role in both eliciting and altering their social experience. Following this critical review, Sameroff and Chandler (1975) proposed a transactional model that proposed that the child's development was the result of continuous, dynamic interactions of the child with the experiences provided in his or her environment.

Recent models have extended earlier formulations by drawing attention to mediating mechanisms and cascading effects across key developmental periods (e.g., Dodge, Greenberg, Malone, & The Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group, 2008; Masten & Cicchetti, 2010) and incorporating multilevel approaches to studying resilience (Cicchetti, 2013). One of the most empirically well-supported applications of the transactional model, highlighting the importance of reciprocal influences, explored the development of antisocial and aggressive behavior in youth. Patterson (1982) delineated a coercion model, whereby initial interactions between a parent(s) who lacked skill in discipline and a mildly noncompliant, temperamentally difficult child set in motion a gradual escalation of parent-child conflict, typically resulting in the parents using increasingly harsh discipline techniques in an attempt to gain control over their child. These harsh discipline practices often served to escalate the child's noncompliant behaviors, rather than reduce them. This sets in motion a coercive cycle that can result in a child who is even more difficult to discipline, and increasingly more noncompliant, hostile and aggressive, taxing the parents' coping even further. There have been many empirical confirmations of this theory over the years, highlighting reciprocal patterns of negative interchanges resulting in later problems with aggression and antisocial behavior (Eddy, Leve, & Fagot, 2001; Pardini, 2008; Patterson, 2002). The findings have significantly informed treatment approaches aimed at breaking these coercive interactions between parents and children and promoting more adaptive long-term outcomes (Brestan & Eyberg, 1998; Pardini, 2008; Patterson, Forgatch, & DeGarmo, 2010).

1.4.3 Pathways and Trajectories: Hybrid Models

Recent advances in the mixed modeling of change over time within and across individuals (e.g., growth and trajectories; see Grimm, Ram, & Hamagami, 2011; Nagin, 2005) have yielded hybrid models that combine features of person-focused and variable-focused models (Masten, 2013). Pathway models focus on identifying different developmental trajectories and provide an opportunity to explore turning points in individuals' lives that might promote resilience as well as setbacks that might impede positive adaptation. Longitudinal data are required for such analyses and allows for the examination of within person changes and between person differences over time which can provide valuable information on processes that serve to produce stability or change in adjustment.

Prior theory and research have identified at least four distinct patterns of positive functioning following acute or chronic life stressors (Bonanno & Diminich, 2013; Masten & Obradović, 2008; Masten & Wright, 2010; Norris, Tracy, & Gallea, 2009). *Stress resistance* refers to a pattern in which the individual seems relatively undisturbed by the adversity encountered. In this pattern the individual is able to maintain reasonably steady and positive adaptive behavior even in the presence of ongoing threats. An example would be a child who demonstrates good functioning in all age-salient developmental tasks despite growing up in a poor family in a dangerous neighborhood, or living with a parent who struggles with substance abuse or depression. A second pattern is indicated by a trajectory in which the individual may experience some initial negative reaction following the experience of a stressful life event or an adversity, but then returns (rebounds) to pre-event functioning. This can be referred to as a *recovery pattern* which can vary considerably in terms of speed of recovery. Typically the time frame for recovery of normal function is short, reflecting the capacity to rebound fairly quickly. In other breakdown and recovery trajectories an individual's prior adaptive functioning declines significantly following the experience of adversity but does return to his or her pre-event level of functioning at a later time. This pattern is often expected to occur in situations of severe or chronic adversity or sudden catastrophe. Such conditions represent stressors that are so challenging that maintaining good adaptation is not expected. For example, when a severe natural disaster has occurred, recovery is expected after the threat has diminished and the community's living conditions have improved. Similarly, a child who is subjected to severe ongoing abuse or neglect is not expected to function well until there has been improvement in his or her caretaking environment. Recovery may be gradual, or it can be significantly delayed, particularly if the adversity continues. Consequently, if the evaluation of an individual's resilience occurs within a short time frame following a disaster or in the midst of chronic adversity, a later-recovering individual would not be identified as resilient at that time, but might be subsequently if the cohort was followed over time. Similarly, in the case of an individual who appeared to regroup quickly but then later fell apart, the identification of resilience for that person would depend on the timing of the assessment of resilience. *Normalization* (termed

emergent resilience by Bonanno & Diminich, 2013) describes a trajectory that occurs when a child begins life in an adverse rearing environment (such as an orphanage where neglect is present) and then the child's situation improves (e.g., through adoption into a loving home). Following a positive change in the environmental conditions, a child may show accelerated development and bio-psycho-social changes that result in movement towards a normal developmental trajectory (Beckett et al., 2006; Rutter and the English and Romanian Adoptees Study Team, 1998). Finally, *transformational or growth patterns* refer to trajectories where an individual's adaptive functioning actually improves in significant ways in the aftermath of trauma or adversity. This type of pattern has also been described as post-traumatic growth (Linley & Joseph, 2004; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995). Rutter (2012) also refers to this pattern of response to adversity or trauma as a 'steeling' effect, in which the individual is actually strengthened by his or her encounter with the stressful or traumatic experience. This type of response fits well with challenge models of accounting for resilience. We view *all* of these patterns as examples of resilience trajectories which differ predominantly in the time frame for recovery and degree of initial disruption of functioning following the experience of trauma or adversity.

Empirical studies of these trajectories are now emerging in the resilience literature. One study by Norris and colleagues explored resilient trajectories in adults following an acute, severe stressor (Norris et al., 2009). They utilized longitudinal data to examine the ability of adults to cope with two different types of extreme stress, severe floods and mudslides in Mexico in 1999 and the terrorist attacks in New York City (NYC) on September 11, 2001. Semi-parametric group-based modeling was utilized to identify trajectories of posttraumatic stress symptoms across 3 follow-up points spanning approximately 24 months post disaster and 30 months following the terrorist attack. Overall the combined prevalence for a resilient outcome (stress resistance and recovery trajectory patterns) was very high in both Mexico (78 %) and NYC (72 %). A delayed dysfunction group only emerged in NYC (14.3 %) but chronic dysfunction was evident in both Mexico (22 %) and NYC (13 %). A relapsing/remitting pattern of symptoms was not seen in either location following either of these stressors (Norris et al., 2009). Overall, the study provided strong longitudinal support for resilience in the overwhelming majority of adults exposed to an acute severe disaster and a life threatening situation.

Several studies of trajectories in young people also have been published. These include trajectories of recovery in child soldiers (Betancourt, McBain, Newnham, & Brennan, 2013), children post-Hurricane Andrew (La Greca et al., 2013), and adolescent girls following a devastating earthquake in China (Luo et al., 2012). In all cases, repeated measures were collected over time and then analyzed using a mixed models statistical strategy to capture distinct group trajectories of intra-individual change. The Betancourt group studied levels of internalizing symptoms over time, while La Greca and colleagues studied post-traumatic symptoms. Both studies found stress resistant and recovering patterns, as well as stable, maladaptive trajectories, and also that the majority of individuals showed resilience over time.

Luo et al. analyzed patterns of change in adolescent females over time in cortisol levels, a biomarker of stress found in hair, which were related to exposure, time, and the presence of post-traumatic stress disorder.

1.5 The Importance of an Ecological Perspective in Resilience Science

During recent years, with the profound shift to a multilevel, dynamic systems model of risk and resilience, there is a new emphasis on the processes embedded in contexts of human life and particularly in cultural processes. Identification of multiple levels within a person's ecology that impact resilience enhances the possibility of targeting a variety of contexts in which to intervene in order to reduce risk, increase resources, and strengthen protective systems. Such an ecologically informed perspective may be critical in maximizing resilient outcomes.

Sociocultural systems provide individuals, often in the context of families and communities, with systems of belief, ways of living and coping with the common vicissitudes of life, and many other practices and pooled cultural knowledge that collectively serve to support positive adaptation under normal circumstances and resilience in very difficult situations (Harkness & Super, 2012). These adaptive traditions and knowledge are transmitted across generations, selected and honed through cultural evolution. Families and cultural institutions are often assigned the task of training the next generation in these cultural beliefs and practices. Although these traditions and belief systems have been studied and documented for generations by anthropologists, there has been relatively limited focus in resilience science on cultural protective factors and processes until relatively recently. Some early reviewers emphasized that context was important (e.g., Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Rutter, 1990), individual scholars called for more sociocultural focus (e.g., Ogbu, 1981), and there was specific research on resilience in particular cultural settings (e.g., LaFromboise, Hoyt, Oliver, & Whitbeck, 2006). However, systematic efforts to study cultural processes in resilience were rare.

With efforts in the twenty-first century to broaden the study of resilience, increase international collaborations, and conduct multi-national studies, there are finally signs of a true renaissance in resilience research with serious attention, at last, to cultural context (Masten, 2014b). This transformation owes a considerable debt to scholars around the world concerned with global crises who share an objective of informing policy or practice designed to promote resilience in diverse contexts. These scholars include a network of investigators focused on the social ecology of resilience (see Ungar et al., 2013), as well as researchers focused on the potential of immigrant youth (see Masten et al., 2012). International investigators who study disaster and political violence with the goal of promoting preparedness, recovery, or peace have played a key role in this globalization wave (for overviews, see Masten, Narayan, Silverman, & Osofsky, in press; Tol, Song, & Jordans, 2013).

International humanitarian and economic agencies, including UNICEF and the World Bank, also have provided both leadership and funding for a more diverse and global portfolio of research on resilience (e.g., Britto, Engle, & Super, 2013; Lundberg & Wuermli, 2012).

As a result of these international efforts, motivated in many cases by global threats to human development, research on resilience in diverse contexts is growing rapidly. Concomitantly, the definition, measures, methods, findings, and issues in resilience literatures in multiple disciplines are changing to reflect the evidence, challenges, and refinements indicated by this body of new work. Enriched and broadened knowledge on resilience over the lifespan in different cultural contexts holds the promise of elucidating both universal and unique adaptive processes and smarter strategies for fostering resilience in context. The chapters in this volume offer a preview of what can be accomplished.

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Chapter 2
Understanding Cultural Contexts and Their Relationship to Resilience Processes

Linda C. Theron and Linda Liebenberg

Social-ecological systems are neither culturally neutral (Smith, Bond, & Kagitcibasi, 2006) nor do they operate at single levels. Instead, they operate at multiple levels that span local contexts and broader global ones (Wright, Masten, & Narayan, 2013). It is, therefore, understood that conceptualisations of resilience, along with the mechanisms that support competent adjustments to adversity, are relative to, and shaped by, the often intersecting cultures that define social ecologies (Masten, 2013; Ungar, 2011; see also Chaps. 1 and 3 of this book).

In this chapter, we consider some of the ways in which both macro- and micro-cultural contexts promote cultural guidelines for everyday living. These processes include, but are not limited to, cultural scripts, national identities, and broad value systems. We then comment critically on the limitations implicit in these processes for explaining resilience processes. Finally we consider how individuals' active navigation of the various cultural contexts they traverse, and critical engagement with their cultural heritage and capital, support a co-constructed process that impacts resilience. This chapter will not, however, explain the complex theories of how cultural allegiances are acquired, how culture shapes learning, comment on how culture and biology are intertwined, or how culture is measured (see, amongst others, Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Hofstede, 1980; Lee, 2010; Pagel, 2012). And, while touched on briefly, it also does not explore in detail how

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L.C. Theron (✉)
Optentia Research Focus Area, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa
e-mail: Linda.theron@nwu.ac.za

L. Liebenberg
Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada

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culture intersects with resilience, or explain how culture matters for resilience, as this is foregrounded in the studies reported in Part II of this book.

2.1 What Is Culture?

Defining culture and understanding how it shapes the social ecologies of youths is not simple, given that culture is a construct that defies easy explanation (Chiu, 2013; Jahoda, 2012; Minkov, Blagoev, & Hofstede, 2013). Its history of changing – and somewhat controversial – definitions partly explains this difficulty (see Cole, 2007, 2008, or Jahoda, 2012, for reviews). Disciplinary allegiance (e.g., sociology, anthropology, cultural psychology, cross-cultural psychology, or evolutionary biology) further confounds how culture is defined (Smith et al., 2006). For example, cross-cultural psychologists, like Hofstede (1980), are likely to equate culture with values that can be measured, aggregated, and ascribed to whole nations, whereas Pagel (2012), an evolutionary biologist, equates culture with an innate capacity that advanced human survival. Culture is further associated with groups, or cultural communities, that range in size from dyads and small families, to entire nations (Rogoff, 2011; Smith et al., 2006). Culture is intertwined with race and ethnicity – and the identities these lead to – as well as distinct from them, and this adds to the difficulty of unravelling what culture is (Jenkins, 2013). Culture is sometimes considered destiny or something people are born into (for example, being born into a particular caste in India), but is more often understood as a socially constructed process (Rogoff, 2011). The mutable reality of culture – that is, its transformations within and across generations – along with cultural consistencies over time, is further complicating (Rogoff, 2011).

Given these complexities, we briefly review conventional components that inform and structure culture, before revisiting our understanding of culture in this chapter's conclusion. These classical views have limited utility for explaining how culture matters for resilience as explained more fully in the section on limitations.

2.1.1 Conventional Understandings of Culture

Endorsement of a shared culture is sometimes explained as a **national culture**. People from the same country are assumed to share cultural practices and values, and encouraged to live out these practices and values. Hofstede's (1980) study comparing IBM employees in over 70 nations is widely attributed as seminal to an understanding of culture-dependent differences and/or similarities across nations (Smith et al., 2006; Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). The underlying assumption is that, by virtue of membership in a specific country (or ecology), individuals are exposed to similar learning experiences (or ecological influences – see Greenfield et al., 2003) that encourage allegiance to similar ways-of-being and

-doing, or a "collective programming of the mind" (Hofstede, 1980, p. 13). By way of illustration, Hofstede (1980, p. 16) reported: "The existence of the American people as a phenomenon is one of the clearest illustrations of the force of learning: With a multitude of genetic roots, it shows collective programming which is striking to the non-American."

In contrast, nations can, for various reasons, lack a definitive national culture. For example, a study conducted by Norris et al. (2008) with 2,082 South African youth, showed that participants were divided in their allegiance to, and understanding of, a South African culture. Youth who self-identified as being either Black or Coloured were more proudly South African and considered South African culture to be a collectivist one. By comparison, youth who self-identified as White or Indian reported weaker endorsement of their 'South African-ness', and associated themselves with individualistic values.

Implicit in this South African example is a tendency to define culture as **a set of (often nationally shared) values**. Cultural values include, but are not limited to, dimensions such as conservatism (Schwartz, 1994), tightness/looseness (as expressions of tolerance for deviance from societal norms – see Gelfand et al., 2011), industry (Minkov et al., 2013), and individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 1980). These values are often used to describe national cultures and explain nations' behaviours, although they also operate at the level of the individual and of microcultures (Chiu, Gelfand, Yamagishi, Shteynberg, & Wan, 2010; Hofstede, 1980).

Individualism versus collectivism is probably the most common approach to explaining culture as a set of national values (Bell, 2011; Greenfield et al., 2003; Harkness & Super, 2012). In the former, the individual is paramount, and directive of how communal onuses are negotiated. In the latter, the collective is emphasized, and given precedence in how obligations are negotiated (Oyserman et al., 2002). Among other processes, the independent or interdependent value systems of individualism and collectivism respectively shape family interactions and expectations (Carlo, Koller, Raffaelli, & de Guzman, 2007), parenting theories and styles (Greenfield et al., 2003), and educational aspirations (Tao & Hong, 2014).

At its most expansive, culture can be defined as global (Ungar et al., 2007). **Global culture** is considered dominant in that it transcends national boundaries in its universal influence. Dominant culture is most typically used with reference to western (a.k.a. American) or 'Coca-Cola' cultures (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997). Smith (2012), for example, explained how some Maori youths in New Zealand abandon adherence to Maori culture by assimilating the culture of American youth through dress, language, dance, music and even choice of role models. In this sense, dominant culture is a marker of cultural norms against which other cultures are measured (and often found wanting). When a culture is considered dominant, or, in Bourdieu's (1986) words, has 'capital', its markers (knowledge, values, symbols, etc.) acquire status and are actively reproduced (Kingston, 2001). For example, in the twentieth century, white, middle-class culture was often positioned as the norm, and aspired to, thereby furthering the marginalisation of lower-class or non-white

communities, and non-white youth in particular, as 'other' (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Fine, 1994).

Culture can also be localised or **associated with a specific group** and is then sometimes described as **micro-culture.** Cross-cultural research of resilience processes with 89 youths in 14 globally diverse sites found that youth considered local culture to consist of "all aspects of ethnic, family or community identification that were distinguished from aspects of global culture" (Ungar et al., 2007, p. 299). Returning to South Africa, this point can be illustrated with reference to ethnic cultures, such as that of the Sotho or Zulu people. Within these groups, dyads, families, or local communities could subscribe to a specific microculture with its own vernacular, ethos, and cultural scripts that determine expectations of members of the group (Neuliep, 2012). Kwaito provides a South African example of a microculture. Specifically, Kwaito is considered a musical and lifestyle culture of some, post-Apartheid black youth that emerged from South African black urban and historical cultural norms (Magubane, 2006).

Finally, when culture is associated with a specific group, this has conventionally been race-related. **Race** is a label typically imposed by bigoted societies – something by which people are categorised and often disregarded (Jenkins, 2013; also see Chap. 9, this volume). Being made explicitly aware of one's race typically leads to heightened affiliation with that race group and its intersubjectively endorsed cultural scripts (Norris et al., 2008). This might explain why youths from dominant cultures (e.g., white youths in North American countries) who are mostly not easily disregarded because of their race are often unaware of their cultural ties (Grossman & Charmaraman, 2009; also see Chaps. 6 and 10, this volume).

2.2 Interactive Macro- and Microsystemic Cultural Contexts: Some Explanations of Process

There are numerous approaches to explaining how cultural contexts guide human development and behaviour (see Greenfield et al., 2003; Harkness & Super, 2012; Smith et al., 2006). One of these is to view culture as a powerful macrosystemic influence that shapes identities and value systems at global, national, and local levels, along with transactions at the micro-level of a social ecology. This view is premised in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory which views people as embedded in ecologies of interdependent micro- through to macrolevel systems. Despite this interdependence, however, the macrolevel is likely to 'set the tone' of the sub-systems nested within it (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Broadly interpreted, this would mean youth are members of a global social ecology with a dominant culture (Ungar et al., 2007). From this perspective, dominant global culture could, potentially, exert a powerful macrosystemic influence. Interpreted less broadly, the macro-context would be youths' membership of nations and/or dominant (ethnic) groups with characteristic cultural scripts

(Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). Either way, the culture of the macro-level (global/national) promotes norms, values, beliefs, and practices – often implicitly reflected in groups' ethnotheories (e.g., of child development – Greenfield et al., 2003; Rogoff, 2011) – that can advance or constrain positive development at the micro-level (Levitt, 2012).

Macro-sociocultural influences shape the structure of microsystems (e.g., extended versus nuclear families), as well as microsystemic goals, morals, orientations, interactions, and socialisation patterns (Bell, 2011; Smith et al., 2006). The culture of the microsystem in turn shapes children's development and behaviour, how resilience processes play out, and even how resilience is characterised. To illustrate, preliminary findings from the Pathways to Resilience Study, South Africa (see www.resilienceresearch.org) show that black youth from a traditional, rural South African community are likely to be considered resilient if they attach to a supportive network (not a nuclear family) and behave in ways that show respect for traditional, ancestral values endorsed by their rural community (Theron, Theron, & Malindi, 2013). In comparison, youth in more individualist urban settings are ordinarily considered resilient if they show increased autonomy and engagement in pathways that will lead to fiscal independence from both family and state (Lesko, 2001).

Constructive norms and practices shape micro-level transactions in ways that support youth to adapt well to their sociocultural life-worlds. As such, the stage is set for children to become well-functioning members of their sociocultural ecology (Bornstein, 2009). However, this mostly requires consensus within a group about the value of such norms, goals, beliefs, and practices (Chiu et al., 2010). Shared endorsement promotes an 'intersubjective reality' (Chiu et al., 2010, p. 483. Then, there is a sense of a common or 'overarching value culture' (Schwartz, 2014, p. 43). Put another way, intersubjectively connected individuals perceive a collective interpretation of their mutual life-world, which informs a cultural script that shapes their being and doing (Smith et al., 2006; Schwartz, 2014). As Jenkins (2013, p. 141) explained, intersubjective cultural scripts offer: "insight, understanding, and interpretation . . . it is not simply food, clothes, music, and religion – it is the answer to the questions: Why these clothes? Why this music? What is the purpose of religion?"

Guidelines for constructive adaptation, or survival, are implicit in the values and practices that cultural scripts promote (Bornstein, 2009; Jenkins, 2013). For example, a traditional African cultural script includes black African youths' duty to kin, both in terms of their meeting the pro-social expectations of older kin, and being an example to younger/future kin. This duty to kin ideally nudges youth toward making constructive life choices. Theron and Theron (2013) reported that for some black South African youth pursuit of tertiary education was a way of fulfilling such duty. Commitment to tertiary education was prompted by cultural esteem of university degrees, partly because of South Africa's political history of excluding black African students from universities, and partly because of tertiary education being associated with upward trajectories. Parents', grandparents', older siblings', ancestors', and teachers' interactions with youth communicated an expectation that

youths make their families, communities, and the collective of black Africans proud by achieving a tertiary education. In this way youth would also be good role models to younger/future kin. This intersubjective endorsement of education as valuable influenced these youths' agency and shaped how they adjusted to hardship.

Micro and macro cultural-contextual influences potentially coalesce to form a heritage culture that shapes being and doing. However, when micro and macro cultural influences, or even global and national/ethnic cultural influences, are at loggerheads, the absence of intersubjective culture could complicate youths' adjustment to their life-worlds. For example, in post-Apartheid South Africa, many black families choose to send their children to schools in formerly white suburbs. Although this potentiates better education, it also privileges English above African languages and strengthens (Western) individualistic values above more traditionally African, collectivist ones (Ramphele, 2012). Thus many black youth have come to associate Western ways-of-being and education in English with success and affluence (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997). Many black youth without access to similar opportunities, and/or those committed to more traditional African microcultures (such as Kwaito), consider westernizing black youth to be turning their backs on their heritage culture. They often use the term 'coconut' to discriminate against black youth whom they regard as behaving like, and aspiring to be, white people (Rudwick, 2008; see also Williams, Aiyer, Durkee, & Tolan, 2013 for a similar process in the USA). 'Coconuts' are seen to espouse an alien cultural script.

Similarly, from her emic perspective as a Maori woman, Smith (2012) argues that the traditional Maori culture of indigenous youth in New Zealand is being undermined by the influence of global culture. Youth, and in particular, marginalised youths who are typically the focus of resilience research, must navigate the intersection of global and local culture. Because there are cultures within cultures, more-often-than-not this intersection is complicated by additional micro cultures to which youth may belong. Where these various cultures are disparate and contradictory – in other words, where intersubjective culture takes more than just one form – youth necessarily have to find ways of resolving these contradictions so as to successfully integrate the ways in which multiple cultural influences inform their lives into a coherent whole (Ungar et al., 2007).

2.3 Interactive Macro- and Microsystemic Cultural Contexts: Some Limitations for Explaining Resilience Processes

Understanding culture as intersecting, competing, or complementary macro- and microsystemic influences can explain how social ecologies are shaped in ways that support/hinder resilience processes. There are, however, limitations to such understandings. From a social ecological perspective, resilience is a process of adjusting well to hardships that involves decisive inputs from youth and their culturally-

oriented life-worlds (Masten, 2013; Ungar, 2011). Interpreting **heritage culture** as micro and/or macro contextual influences implies that youth and others are passive recipients of culture. Such a perspective undercuts the salience of human agency in processes of development and resilience (Gillespie, Howarth, & Cornish, 2012). It is probable that well-adjusted youths and their relational networks do not "mindlessly act on the implicit cultural scripts evolved from their interactions with the shared ecology" (Chiu et al., 2010, p. 483). Similarly, explaining **global culture** as a template, originating at macro-level, that informs proximal level transactions, does not account for heterogeneous responses to macro level scripts (Chiu et al., 2010). For example, traditionally African societies socialise children to be deeply spiritual and to respect ancestral practices. Ancestral rituals are considered supportive of resilience processes (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Denis, 2007). Despite the promotion of ancestral beliefs and practices as a template for successful living, some black Africans choose to disregard this as a pathway to resilience (Theron & Theron, 2013). In their response, they exercise agency and show that enactment of cultural heritage involves 'selecting, editing and refashioning' (Bornstein, 2009, p. 149).

As made apparent in Norris and colleagues' 2008 study of 'South African' culture, descriptions of culture as **national** are also challenging. This is mostly because nations are comprised of multiple groupings, or sub-cultures, that coalesce around shared interpretations of common life-worlds which might or might not be compatible with that of the macro-culture (Gillespie et al., 2012). In addition to race (as in the South African study by Norris et al.), these could include groupings relating to profession, sexuality, social class, tribal affiliation, ethnicity, and so forth. Modern nations are also increasingly multi-cultural, given growing numbers of migrants (Masten, Liebkind, & Hernandez, 2012). Depending on socio-political and socio-historical context, such sub-cultures could be marginalised and/or stereotyped and their cultural scripts neglected/disrespected in explanations of resilience processes (Bell, 2011; Jenkins, 2013; Smith et al., 2006).

Explaining culture as a **belief or value system** that is common to a culture-sharing group (at micro or macro level) is also risky if it offers a dichotomous and or rigid interpretation of values and beliefs (Greenfield et al., 2003; Omi, 2012; Oyserman et al., 2002). Most typically, contrasting values (such as independence and interdependence) co-exist along a continuum, and are prioritised differently. For example, in traditionally individualistic societies, children are taught to share. However, the emphasis on learning to share is typically less than in collectivist groups, where sharing is taken for granted (Greenfield et al., 2003). What's more, culturally-esteemed values (e.g., interdependence) do not necessarily enable resilience processes consistently, or uniformly. Obligations to the collective (e.g., duty to the family), for example, are associated with resilience processes for a variety of reasons (see Cameron et al., 2013; Ferguson, Desir, & Bornstein, 2013; Theron & Theron, 2013). For example, Ferguson et al.'s (2013) study of the cultural orientation of early adolescents in rural Haiti from deprived circumstances reported a strong sense of youth obligation to the running and upkeep of their family home without any expectation of payment. This strong sense of duty directed adolescent

agency and protected them against despair at their deprivation. However, obligations to the collective can be obstructive of resilience processes if they are experienced as oppressive (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012; Tao & Hong, 2014).

Lastly, value systems, like the cultures they are associated with, are **fluid**, as are people's allegiances to these systems. For example, there is a growing global trend towards individualistic values (Schwartz, 2014), often in association with increased wealth (Hofstede, Garibaldi de Hilal, Malvezzi, Tanure, & Vinken, 2010; Oyserman et al., 2002). Moreover, the power of an intersubjective, macro culture of values is likely to be less powerful than that of proximal, often co-existing, micro- cultural communities (e.g., families, organisations, ethnic groups, and religious bodies – see Schwartz, 2014).

In summary, using membership of a bounded culture-sharing group, be it national, ethnic, or socioeconomic, etc., in a rigid manner does not offer an understanding of culture that can usefully explain resilience processes. In Rogoff's (2011, p. 15) words:

> Culture is often treated as a set of static ethnic "boxes" – such as Latino, African American, Asian – that individuals "belong in". And they can belong in only one box. All people "in" an ethnic box are assumed to be alike in an enduring and essentially in-born fashion. This is a rigid form of predestination.

Implicit in such categorisation, are deficit approaches to culture that foster stereotypical explanations of vulnerability and resilience processes (Gillespie et al., 2012), as is routinely seen in some studies of African American and Latino males (Williams et al., 2013). Similarly, bounded groups (such as Americans or Muslims) are often cast as incompatible, limiting exploration of how multicultural contexts support resilience processes (Sirin & Gupta, 2012). Compartmentalising cultural membership also obscures within-group processes that threaten resilience. For example, American Chinese adolescents report being made vulnerable by alienation from non-Chinese peers, but also Chinese peers (Qin, Way, & Mukherjee, 2008). Cultural adherence can therefore serve as a protective component of resilience, or can jeopardise resilience processes, underscoring the importance of researchers and practitioners giving careful consideration to the role of culture in resilience processes. Explaining resilience processes in terms of allegiances to broad culturally-dependent value systems, without interrogating the complexities and dynamics of such value systems, would be at best superficial and at worst, marginalising and harmful. Just as Collins (1999) has urged feminist researchers to account for the complexity of the matrix of domination within which women live, so too should resilience researchers account for the matrix of cultural experiences.

2.4 An Alternative Understanding: Culture as Capital and a Co-constructed Process

Arguing against a deficit model of culture, Yosso (2005) urged us to consider the cultural capital implicit in the heritage cultures of youth in marginalised and vulnerable communities. Drawing on the work of scholars such as Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992), Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg (1992), and Olmedo (1997), she advocated recognition of the wealth of "communal funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez & Moll, 2002; Gonzalez et al., 1995) available through culture. Yosso explained that cultural wealth includes six forms of capital: (i) aspirational (maintaining hopes and dreams), (ii) navigational (the capacity to manoeuvre through social and psychological spaces by drawing on both individual agency and social networks), (iii) social (networks of people and community resources that provide support and assistance), (iv) linguistic (intellectual and social skills attained through multilingualism), (v) familial (a broad understanding of kinship that includes extended family and community and the continuity of community history, memory and cultural intuition), and (vi) resistant capital (behaviour that challenges or resists oppression and inequality). These dimensions of cultural capital provide youth with strengths and capacities that are often overlooked, because they differ from dominant, mainstream cultural components. As with the seven tensions of resilience (Ungar et al., 2007) and universally occurring adaptive systems (Masten & Wright, 2010), these six forms of capital intersect and draw on each other as processes of cultural support.

Although there is protective value in intergenerational legacies of knowledge, beliefs, values, and practices that underscore cultural capital and provide guidelines for everyday living (Cole, 2008; Jenkins, 2013; Pagel, 2012), the adaptive value of culture depends on how youth embrace their cultural legacies (Chiu et al., 2010). Embracing culture implies action, or attentive ways-of-being and –doing. Rogoff (2011, pp. 17–18) suggested:

> If we open-mindedly examine how people live, we can move beyond using ethnic labels that assign predetermined characteristics to people. We can think of culture as communities' ways of living. Our focus thus becomes people's participation in cultural practices. This helps us understand the commonalities and differences that exist both within and among cultural communities . . . and communities' changes and continuities.

In her description of the consecrated life of Chona Pérez, a Mayan midwife, Rogoff (2011) illustrated how Chona's adjustment to her life-world's challenges was scaffolded by her mindful participation in cultural activities. Mindful participation included the reproduction of communal funds of knowledge and practices that were protective, a negotiation to change cultural heritage that was no longer optimally useful, and subsequent cautious transformation thereof, in collaboration with others. Accordingly, Chona's case exemplifies active engagement with cultural legacy that was integral to her micro and macrosystemic context. In the course of this interaction, culture could be understood as a co-constructed process (Chiu et al., 2010).

When culture is understood and enacted as co-constructed, it offers ways-of-being-and-doing that "supply the solutions we use to survive and prosper in the society of our birth" (Pagel, 2012, p. 3). Such co-constructed solutions offer tools to navigate hardship (Jenkins, 2013). Thus, in seeking to explain how culture shapes social ecologies in ways that facilitate and/or obstruct resilience, it is necessary to consider not only what values and practices from social ecological and cultural systems are passed on to youth, but also how youth adopt, adapt, and discard these.

Conclusion

A growing body of literature argues for cautious consideration of the protective role of cultural practices in youth resilience research and interventions (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012; Theron & Theron, 2013; Ungar, 2011). Our intent with this chapter was to facilitate an awareness of the complexities of cultural considerations that can more critically inform the study of resilience. Specifically, we hoped to underscore the multifaceted and nuanced nature of an individual's cultural positioning and the enactment of cultural practices, and in doing so, establish a framework which prevents the positioning of youth into simplistic understandings of cultural belonging. Thus, this chapter encourages a more detailed consideration of the subtle ways in which cultural influences impact youth, their social ecologies, and their related individual and collective processes of resilience; as well as the ways in which culture is a co-constructed, social process. Given the goal of resilience research as one of informing practice and supporting the lives of marginalised and vulnerable youth, through which a commitment to social justice is implied, a careful consideration of culture is essential.

Against this backdrop of complexity, and for the purposes of this book, we conclude by cautiously defining culture as **socially-constructed and socially-shared ways-of-being-and-doing**. These shared, or patterned, ways-of-being and-doing flow from intergenerational legacies of knowledge and values. These legacies offer capital that provides guidelines for everyday living and potentially bind together the people who share them (Cole, 2007, 2008; Pagel, 2012). They also flow from individuals' active engagement with their cultural legacy, in ways that endorse and, as necessary, transform cultural heritage (Rogoff, 2011). As such, cultural practices both shape the behaviours and interactions of people, and provide a framework for understanding the world surrounding individuals and groups. Respect for this complexity, should support resilience researchers and practitioners to meaningfully identify and enhance culturally-shaped resilience processes.

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Chapter 3
Resilience and Culture: The Diversity of Protective Processes and Positive Adaptation

Michael Ungar

How different are patterns of coping with adversity across cultures? Is adherence to our 'heritage culture' (i.e., the culture of our grandparents) always a source of strength or can it disadvantage us? Does culture influence the value we place on different patterns of coping, privileging some as socially acceptable and labeling others as maladaptive? Each of these questions is important if we are to understand the relationship between culture and resilience.

By introducing cultural variation to our understanding of resilience, heterogeneity can be observed in how children cope successfully with traumatic events. For example, following removal from an abusive home, or the death of a parent, differences in personality, cognition and behavior play a role in a child's ability to cope during a period of foster care or adoption (Rutter, Quinton, & Hill, 1990). Differences in the child's social ecology, though, also play a significant part in the child's adaptation (Schofield, 2000). At a practical level, culture influences meaning systems, which in turn influence which resources are provided to vulnerable children. These include such things as the structure of alternative care that communities invest in (Is it home-based or in an institution? Is it with kin or non-kin?). Culture also shapes the meaning attributed to being a foster child or orphan, with different amounts of stigma and different life opportunities attached to state supported care (Harvey, 2007; Pecora, 2012). For an individual child, cultural factors change exposure to risk factors, negative life trajectories, and threats to self-worth (Lawrence, Carlson, & Egeland, 2006). Importantly though, a community's values, beliefs and everyday practices will also provide diverse opportunities for a child to access resources like social capital, food, education, and opportunities for secure attachments with adults. It is this dynamic process of interaction between individuals, their environments and their culture that is the focus of this chapter.

M. Ungar (✉)
Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada
e-mail: Michael.Ungar@dal.ca

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3.1 What Is Culture? What Is Context?

Culture is the everyday practices that bring order to our experience, and the values and beliefs that support them (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Rogoff, 2003). Context refers to the broader social and physical ecologies that shape a child's lived experience. Context, however, also includes culture and the many other aspects of our social ecology influenced by culture like the structure of our government and to whom we turn to for social support. For example, whether a child lives in a rural or urban setting, and whether a child is supported by a government that provides services for a physical or intellectual disability, are all contextual factors that may reflect the family's culture and the values that culture promotes (e.g., rugged individualism of the traditional farm family). Given the many ways culture influences social processes, culture is, therefore, best understood as a multidimensional construct.

Culture is also temporal. It matters a great deal the period in which one grows up and the socioeconomic conditions that prevail (1970s or 1990s Britain, pre- or post-911 United States, pre- or post-Apartheid South Africa) (Schoon, 2006). Historical periods are defined by the multiple social forces which in turn influence the expression of cultural practices. We know from the work of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) that culture (a macro-systemic factor) and context (an exo-systemic factor) are never distinct. Culture shapes the values that are reflected in how and to whom health-promoting resources like education and mental health services are provided. In many ways, our social ecologies (all aspects of the context and culture in which we live) reflect both our own culture and the diversity of the cultures with which our lives intersect.

By way of illustration, consider a collectivist society like Japan where the institutional care of orphans is the most common model of care. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of *ibasho,* or attachment to place, within the institution (Bamba & Haight, 2011). In contrast, in Canadian and American non-Aboriginal contexts institutional placement is viewed as a potential threat to a child's psychosocial development (Ross, Conger, & Armstrong, 2002). Likewise, there are "orphan competent communities" (Skovdal & Campbell, 2010) around the world that facilitate a child's successful transition to out-of-home placement. For example, in some African nations and in Aboriginal communities in North America cultural norms emphasize the role of the extended family and favor kinship adoption over out-of-community placement for their children, even when there are risks associated with this policy (Blackstock & Trocmé, 2005; Van Graan, Van der Walt, & Watson, 2007). In each case, a child will be given resources to mitigate disruptions in attachment in ways that are culturally prescribed.

A culturally embedded understanding of resilience focuses attention on the diversity of coping strategies and the heterogeneity of what are assumed to be normative behaviours. Alegria et al. (2004), working from within an emic-etic paradigm (Brislin, Lonner, & Thorndike, 1973), have observed in their national data gathered from Latina and Latino youth in the United States, "The *emic*

perspective starts with the concepts from within the culture and seeks to understand the meaning of that which is studied and its associations with other factors using that cultural framework. On the other hand, the *etic* perspective involves the evaluation of phenomena using more culturally neutral or 'objective' constructs" (p. 272). Both perspectives have helped to develop understanding of the cultural complexity of resilience.

3.2 Common and Unique Protective Factors

To demonstrate the tension between etic and emic perspectives, my colleagues and I conducted a mixed methods 11-country (Canada, United States, China, India, Israel, Palestine, Russia, Gambia, Tanzania, South Africa, Colombia) study of adolescents' patterns of coping in challenging contexts (Ungar et al., 2007). Analysis of the qualitative data identified seven clusters of protective factors that participants said accounted for their successful coping in contexts where they experienced poverty, the death of their parents, economic migration, war, mental illness of a parent, or the stigma that accompanies a physical disability. All the adolescents referred to the study were seen by members of a local advisory committee as resilient: the youth were at-risk because of their exposure to psychological, physical and social barriers to development but were doing well in ways relevant to their community. The seven protective factors that were identified included:

1. Relationships: Though relationships with a primary caregiver were important, so too were other sources of social capital like prosocial peers, adult mentors, teachers, and extended family.
2. A powerful identity: Having a sense of one's self as being competent and respected for one's skills were common experiences among youth doing well. Youth emphasized the need to have access to opportunities that reinforced competencies. Recognition from others fostered self-reflection among the youth and reinforced self-esteem.
3. Personal control and efficacy: The youth's ability to exercise some say over his or her world was important to experiences of empowerment. The better these experiences were facilitated by the adolescent's environment (e.g., the youth was listened to and his or her recommendations to care providers taken seriously) the more the adolescent reported being able to cope under stress.
4. Social justice: Youth who experienced themselves as being treated fairly in their communities attributed those experiences to their capacity to do well.
5. Access to material resources: Youth who did well enjoyed access to adequate food, clothing, education, and future opportunities for employment. This access was facilitated through family or community relationships or through government policies and contact with formal service providers.

6. Sense of cohesion: Adolescents who reported a sense of belonging within a community of relationships, or at school, those that expressed their spirituality or a religious affiliation, and those that found life meaningful, coped better.
7. Cultural adherence: Identification with a set of group beliefs and norms was described as protective when experiencing marginalization or stress.

While not every young person identified all seven of these factors in their lives, across the entire sample all seven appeared to varying degrees in every country. How each was expressed, however, was very different in each context. For example, cultural adherence meant nationalism in the Russian sample while for Northern Aboriginal youth in Canada it connoted engagement with the cultural practices of elders. Furthermore, it has been shown that any of the seven factors can pose a barrier to a child's development when they manifest in ways that threaten long-term success. To illustrate, ethnographic studies have demonstrated that personal efficacy, material resources, and a sense of cohesion can be found among delinquent peers when a young person feels excluded from his or her community. In the short term, the choice of peer group may protect the child from feeling isolated or disempowered, though long term such coping strategies may have negative, lifelong consequences (Heinonen, 2011; Totten, 2000).

The study's quantitative data had similar results, with different factor structures being reported for different populations of youth even though all items on the original 58-question self-report measure were shown to be relevant to young people's lives (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). For example, when we accounted for contextual factors, girls had more in common with their same-sex peers in other countries than with the male youth sitting across from them in their classrooms.

3.3 What Is Resilience?

To account for cultural differences, resilience needs a definition that is explicit as to the role culture plays in supporting or inhibiting a child's ability to cope. A cultural lens helps us decenter our understanding of resilience. It focuses less attention on what the child does and much more on how environments facilitate positive developmental processes and access to the kinds of protective factors described above. Understood as a social ecological concept, resilience is the ability of individuals (on their own and collectively) to navigate to the culturally relevant resources they need to do well when confronting adversity, as well as their capacity to negotiate for these resources to be provided in ways that are meaningful (Ungar, 2008, 2011). Resources can be individual (e.g., a personality trait, intelligence, or a personal talent), relational (e.g., attachment to a caregiver or mentor, positive peer interactions, extended family) or collective, in which case it is the immediate and broader community's responsibility to make resources available and accessible (e.g., a sense of belonging, experiences of cultural continuity through participation

in traditional celebrations, personal safety, opportunities to contribute to the welfare of others).

While the individual's capacity to navigate includes his or her motivation to succeed, personal talents and personality traits, the value placed on these capacities is always negotiated (Bottrell & Armstrong, 2012; Ungar, 2004). For example, which services for which children in what quantity are decisions controlled by those who hold political and social power. A poorly funded school and a lack of access to the psychological services needed to assess a learning disability can seriously impede a child's potential for success even when the child is motivated to learn and is of above average intelligence. A social ecological understanding of resilience suggests that when considering the individual x environment equation, the more challenging the child's barriers to growth and psychological development are, whether those barriers are individual or systemic, the more the environment's potential to provide health-enhancing resources matters (DuMont, Ehrhard-Dietzel, & Kirkland, 2012; Ungar, 2012). In other words, in more threatening contexts, it is the rare support that a child experiences that has a disproportionately large impact on the child's ability to survive and thrive. For example, the narratives of resilient adults suggests that an adult who mentors a child in a context where the child experiences abuse and neglect has the potential to dramatically change the child's life trajectory (see, for example, Simpson & Ungar, 2012; Theron & Engelbrecht, 2012).

3.4 Cultural Relativism

The field of resilience has been increasingly sensitive to the role culture plays both as a protective factor (e.g., in some cases, adhering to one's culture can prevent mental illness among new immigrants when acculturation results in an individual's loss of identity and exposure to racism – Grant et al., 2004) and as a system of values and beliefs. These aspects of culture shape priorities for families, communities, and governments when they invest in children's well-being (Barber, 2006). Universalist assumptions of what makes children resilient persist (e.g., they should go to school, have primary attachments to a caregiver, show evidence of personal efficacy, be less impulsive, etc.) but the field has acknowledged that different cultural groups endorse these benchmarks of resilience to differing degrees.

This shift in perspective began early with the work by Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith (1982, 2001) in Kuaii, an island of Hawaii, as they followed a cohort of children born into conditions of relative poverty. Socioeconomic status differences were important to understanding the children's patterns of coping. For example, in the context where a family member had a mental illness, or was severely disadvantaged economically, children showed a strong dependence on extended family and non-kin adults for support. These relationships reflected the need for a more permeable family structure than is typical of nuclear families.

Later work by Hamilton McCubbin and his colleagues with African Americans and Native Americans continued to name differences in patterns of coping (McCubbin, Thompson, Thompson, & Fromer, 1998; McCubbin, Thompson, Thompson, & Futrell, 1998) such as the emphasis by Native Americans on a relational worldview. Cultural practices in these communities promote connections between people and between people and nature, and focus less attention on individual strengths and coping strategies. These were all exciting efforts to introduce a cultural lens into studies of resilience. However, earlier efforts to assess resilience among different cultural groups facing different contextual challenges like poverty or violence made three assumptions that have undermined their external validity.

3.4.1 The Influence of the Dominant Culture

First, previous studies have tended to de-emphasize the homogeneity of contexts like schools and online communities like Facebook in which children from different cultural backgrounds participate. For example, American children in Hawaii, Oregon or New York are living in contexts that share a reasonably similar set of societal values and cultural practices. We can assume they think about their rights and responsibilities in ways that reflect western democratic values of participation and social contract. While studies of resilience have emerged to document competing cultural values of people living in western-style democracies (for example, Luthar, 2003; Reich, Zautra, & Hall, 2010), the assumption of these studies is that cultural differences in a single country like the United States are very important. What is overlooked when making that assumption is that, on balance, there is one dominant culture from which most research participants learn their values and everyday practices, transmitted to children through common cultural portals like school, the media, their interaction with peers, and recently, social media. How much does culture count when people share a country, especially when that country's values are clearly articulated (see Achenbach, 2008)? Research shows that there is a tendency for cultural groups to influence one another, creating what has been termed "cross-ethnic equivalence" (Krishnakumar, Buehler, & Barber, 2004). Living side-by-side, in sociopolitical contexts of shared spaces and activities, there is almost always a 'contagion effect' through socialization.

3.4.2 Within Group Resistance to Subgroup Norms

A second problem with assumptions that culture distinguishes who we are and the protective factors that are important to us is that even within one cultural group there are often individuals who resist conforming to group norms, including definitions of what is and is not good behavior. Black youth in America, for example, can hold very divergent views on the value of education depending on

their social class or history of exposure to racism (Dotterer, McHale, & Crouter, 2009). In other words, while we expect there to be cultural drift towards mutually held values, when we ask people about the coping strategies they prefer, resistance to cultural hegemony can occur both inside a population and between populations.

3.4.3 Cultural Differences in Discursive Power

The third problem with earlier efforts to consider cultural differences in children's resilience is that they seldom considered the relative differences in discursive power between individuals who come from different cultural groups. For example, we know that people from diverse cultures and contexts value education differently (Chavous, Rivas-Drake, Smalls, Griffin, & Cogburn, 2008). While economic success and security is preferred, in some sociohistorical contexts like a boom economy, or when racism and sexism close doors to future employment opportunities, remaining in school longer may not be associated with resilience if early school leaving can help a child successfully engage in well-paying jobs or early parenthood (during periods when both are seen as socially desirable alternatives to school) (Schoon, 2006). Likewise, school drop-out may be a strategy some ethnic minorities use to protect themselves from structural racism. Their perception of post-secondary education is that the investment is not worth the effort if there is no promise of a good job after graduation (Dei, Massuca, McIsaac, & Zine, 1997). In both cases, marginalised groups may experience atypical resilience that makes sense to them, though their coping strategies are seen as problematic by those who represent the dominant culture. In this discursive battle to decide which pathway is the "correct" one, we have tended to listen to the views of cultural elites who privilege a particular set of practices as being better than others. This is even more the case when we consider that in some contexts behaviours like early pregnancy (Langille, Flowerdew, & Andreou, 2004) and substance abuse (Santor, Messervey, & Kusumakar, 2000) are seen as rites of passage that mark a healthy transition to adulthood and function in ways that are protective when there are few other coping strategies available. While there may be debate over whether these patterns produce long-term benefits, we seldom see a discussion in the literature concerning why some behaviours are better than others. The implicit assumption seems to be that the dominant cultural values should be used as the benchmarks for successful child development for all children.

Addressing this problem was one of the purposes of the 11 country study described earlier (Ungar et al., 2007). Among the many different patterns of coping that we noticed was, for example, young mothers who accounted for their success in very different ways. While they tended to value financial security and a socially acceptable role, their coping strategies reflected distinct cultural values. In Northern Tanzania, a 16-year-old mother defined resilience in terms of her ability to secure a micro-credit loan and establish herself as a fruit and vegetable seller in the market. In a context of colonialisation where her ancestors had survived as traders and

entrepreneurs, and in a culture that placed less value on women's education, opening a small business made sense and would result in improved outcomes. In contrast, a 17-year-old mother in western Canada spoke at length about how her teachers at school had helped keep her engaged in education by providing material and emotional support for her and her child. In the Canadian context, resilience is understood as the result of engagement at school when early school leaving is most likely. So what, then, do we make of the young mother from Tanzania? Is her early school leaving and desire to start a business simply a maladaptive form of coping, a cultural anomaly, or a negotiation for local resources? When it comes to understanding resilience, we need to ask, "At what point is a behavior maladaptive and who decides?" (Butcher, Nezami, & Exner, 1998). As Stevan Hobfoll (2011) suggests, children in different circumstances demonstrate a conservation of resources that maximize well-being though their patterns of coping may not be obvious to cultural outsiders.

Who decides, then, what is a protective process? And why are some protective processes more valued than others? Let's assume for a moment that Tanzanian scholars had been the first to describe resilience as a phenomenon rather than scholars in countries like the United States and Britain. They may have noted that the ability to become meaningfully engaged as a market trader early in life was a gender-specific protective mechanism that provides a young woman with financial independence and respect from her community. They would likely have also highlighted the ability to speak more than one language as protective given that most Tanzanians speak a tribal language, their national language Swahili, and English. They might also have measured a child's sense of responsibility for others of her tribal group, the traditional value of *Ubuntu,* or *Utu* as it is called locally. If these Tanzanian scholars had then decided to do cross-cultural research and investigated the resilience of the young mother in Canada, their assessment of her resilience might have noted how poorly she was doing: she had remained dependent on others for her financial well-being; she was living isolated with her child rather than seeking the support of her extended family and community; she spoke only one language; and she pursued late-life education rather than employment.

In this fictional exercise it is easy to see that there are competing discourses that define meaningful outcomes across cultures, but that one has been given authority. By evaluating cultural differences in pathways to resilience, we need to not only identify hidden, or unnamed, processes, we also need to privilege them with the discursive power to be heard by those outside the culture. The more marginalized the cultural group, the less likely they are to have the power to influence others and convince them that their pathways to resilience make sense. Thus, how culture defines patterns of coping depends largely on the constitutive force of the meaning-making that occurs through culture and people's participation in it.

3.5 Different Cultures, Different Values

The co-construction of what is a meaningful expression of resilience, then, reflects the relative power of those involved to argue for the legitimacy of their culturally embedded patterns of coping. For example, Nguyen-Gillham, Giacaman, Naser and Boyce (2008) showed through a qualitative inquiry with 321 Grade 11 Palestinian youth that resilience can be equated with enduring the negative impact of prolonged social and political struggle:

> The Palestinian concept of *sumud*—a determination to exist through being steadfast and rooted to the land—is at the heart of resilience. Within a Palestinian context, suffering and endurance have to be interpreted at both an individual and collective level. The construct of resilience goes beyond an individualistic interpretation: resilience is (re)constituted as a wider collective and social representation of what it means to endure. (p. 292)

Amid the dehumanization that the youth described, they reported that webs of supportive relationships, the need to make life as normal as possible, political participation, getting an education, and optimism despite hardship were important to maintaining well-being. While the aspects of resilience these youth identify are not extraordinary (as described earlier, they appear across many different cultures as part of the seven protective factors), the relative impact they have may be. The degree of exposure to adversity appears to shape the meaningfulness of different protective factors (Abramson, Park, Stehling-Ariza, & Redlener, 2010). The advantage to looking across cultures is that we can see causal mechanisms in action, becoming aware of what is occurring in different cultures facing different kinds and amounts of adversity.

Conclusion

The increasingly pluralistic migrant nature of many societies, not just in middle- and higher-income countries, but also lower-income countries as well, makes it imperative to account for the multiculturalism of competing ways we understand positive development under stress and protective processes. If we are to intervene to help children cope better with adversity we are going to need to have a better understanding of different patterns of coping across cultures. We are going to need to understand the protective qualities of adherence to our heritage culture and when that adherence disadvantages our adaptability. And we are going to need to understand how culture influences the value we place on different expressions of resilience. Navigations and negotiations for resources are not value neutral processes. Which protective processes are considered to be most relevant to which populations in which context at which point in time reflect a social ecological understanding of resilience that introduces much needed complexity into models of coping under adversity.

(continued)

Greater dialogue across cultures, as represented by a volume like this one, will help contribute to this broader discourse that identifies how children cope. To the extent that we succeed, we will avoid the all too present danger of privileging some pathways to resilience as socially acceptable, and labeling others as maladaptive when they are simply culturally distinct. Of course, not all patterns of resilience will be seen as socially acceptable. For those with few options, however, even an atypical coping strategy used in a challenging context may be preferable to options that may compromise mental health and well-being even worse.

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Part II
Illustrative (Case) Studies: Youth Resilience and Culture

Chapter 4
Cultural Pathways to Resilience: Opportunities and Obstacles as Recalled by Black South African Students

Linda C. Theron and Nareadi Phasha

In her definitive book 'Conversations with my sons and daughters', Mamphela Ramphele explains that what sets black South Africans apart from other South African cultural groups is 'interconnectedness' which 'is at the centre of our being and consciousness' (2012, p. 61). Fundamentally, interconnectedness rejects the view of an individual as an isolated being. Instead, an individual is viewed as an integral part of an interdependent society; one who also shares a relationship with all of nature and humankind, both living and dead (Mbiti, 1969). Although interdependence conceivably informs the resilience processes of youths from other collectivist communities across Africa, it is increasingly being reported as integral to black South African youths' resilience (Phasha, 2010; Theron, 2013; Theron & Theron, 2013).

4.1 An African Worldview and *Ubuntu*

The indigenous people of Africa belong to various, autonomous African countries, yet many (particularly sub-Saharan Africans) are united by a worldview that celebrates interconnectedness (Watson, McMahon, Mkhize, Schweitzer, & Mpofu, 2011). This African heritage of interconnectedness has been passed on,

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L.C. Theron (✉)
Optentia Research Focus Area, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa
e-mail: Linda.theron@nwu.ac.za

N. Phasha
Department of Inclusive Education, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

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and practised, for centuries (Nussbaum, 2003). Interdependent ways-of-being even continue to characterise the coping styles of twenty-first century African Americans whose forefathers were displaced during the African diaspora of the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries (Utsey, Adams, & Bolden, 2000).

Ubuntu, or in other South African vernaculars, *Botho*, *Vumunhi*, or *Uhuthu* (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009), is fundamental to an African heritage of interconnectedness (Nolte-Schamm, 2006). Despite the popularity of *Ubuntu* philosophies, it is neither a simplistic nor monolithic concept (Nussbaum, 2003; Watson et al., 2011). Mandela (1995), for example, cautioned that respect for egalitarian, interdependent ways-of-being was not practised uniformly by black South Africans. In his view, western influences (such as industrialisation) introduced status as a marker of dignity, and so altered the non-judgmental culture of *Ubuntu*. Likewise, Ramphele (2012) noted less support for *Ubuntu* philosophies among twenty-first century black South Africans. She associated this decline with the decision of many modern black South African families to raise their children as English-speaking, westernized youngsters. Western socialisation is associated with individualised, non-*Ubuntu* values. The waning of *Ubuntu* is also associated with how AIDS has decimated family communities, leaving child-headed families without elders to maintain the passing on of cultural heritage (Muthukrishna & Sam, 2011). Likewise, rampant unemployment, crippling poverty, and violent crime – all enduring legacies of Apartheid – govern the existence of most black South Africans in post-1994 South Africa (Du Preez, 2011). This bleak reality galvanizes distrust of interdependence and angry disharmony, as does the frequent evidence of nepotism (Nolte-Schamm, 2006). Nevertheless, black youth of South Africa are urged to draw on their *Ubuntu*-heritage to transform contemporary South Africa (Ramphele, 2012).

The above-mentioned call links to the ethical crux of *Ubuntu*. In Pityana's (1999) terms, *Ubuntu* is a moral principle which promotes social responsibility and solidarity, virtues of sensitivity and selflessness, and devotion to duty. Essentially, *Ubuntu* is a humane way of being (i.e., an inner state) and doing (i.e., an external manifestation) that dictates profound respect for the self, fellow beings (present and past), and all of creation (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009; Ramphele, 2012; Waghid & Smeyers, 2012).

In post-1994 South Africa, *Ubuntu* has unfortunately been bandied about in political and religious rhetoric, and in educational curricula, in ways that either disrespect, or only approximate, its ethos of 'humanity towards others' (Jansen, 2009, p. 176). Shallow or stereotypical explanations of *Ubuntu* miss that such respect encourages generosity to the self and others and so promotes dignity, harmony, forgiveness, compassion, and deep spirituality, which in turn potentially liberate individuals and heal societies (Jansen, 2009; Nolte-Schamm, 2006; Tutu, 2009; Waghid & Smeyers, 2012). Accordingly, when children are socialised to respect *Ubuntu* values, and when they internalise and practise these values, they know that people are inherently valuable and that their value is best expressed in community with others – thus, every person belongs, co-exists, and contributes. Such an understanding potentiates positive adjustment to hardship as children learn

that they can expect to be respected, forgiven, supported, and accepted, just as they learn that they have a duty to respect, forgive, share, tolerate, contribute and maintain solidarity to others (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009).

Belonging to a collective whole shapes family systems and spiritual practices of black children growing up in traditional contexts. Reciprocally, these systemic practices potentially offer children opportunity to enact, and experience, the moral essence of *Ubuntu*. Traditionally, black South African children are reared in a 'family community' (Mkhize, 2006, p. 187), which means that extended kin, living and dead, invest in the best interests of children. Children, in turn, are instructed to show respectful obedience to all adults and elders, and are expected to make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of their kinship system (Nolte-Schamm, 2006; Watson et al., 2011). For example, children are expected to complete daily household tasks such as preparing food, cleaning, or running errands for adults. Children are socialised to accept that dead kin (i.e., ancestors) remain in solidarity with them, and are also to be respected (Bujo, 2009; Mandela, 1995). Moreover, children are socialised toward an inclusive way of being that encourages the acceptance of biologically unrelated others as family, thereby extending the circle of support and duty (Murove, 2009). Although kinship systems potentiate protection for children, they should not be idealised. For example, the dictate of obedience to adults and elders could leave children vulnerable in contexts where adults abuse their power (Nolte-Schamm, 2006).

In many black South African families, part of being valued and valuing others has found expression in educational aspirations and the achievement of these aspirations (Phasha, 2010). In the Apartheid era black South Africans who attended public schools were denied an education that would leverage white-collar employment or university access, and the majority of tertiary institutions refused black South Africans access. Mandela (1995, p. 195) summarised this as 'a way of institutionalizing inferiority'. Indeed, African icons (like Biko and Mandela) conceptualised the educational achievement of black South Africans as a potential 'turning point' (Rutter, 2013, p. 478). Thus, for black South African families educational progress carries a moral imperative: it offers opportunity to (a) compensate for historic educational inequities, (b) transcend poverty and simultaneously uplift their family communities, (c) affirm the self-worth of black South Africans, and (d) bring honour to the African collective (Biko, 1979; Gqola, 2011). Consequently, black South African youth are urged to pursue educational goals and to understand that educational achievement, and the upward trajectories associated with this, offer opportunity to fulfil duty to kin (Theron & Theron, 2013).

4.2 The Protective Value of an African Worldview: South African Findings

Despite there being multiple studies of resilience processes among South African youth, until the end of 2009 few of these considered how *culture* contributed to positive adjustment. Even fewer studies considered whether/how traditionally African life-views promoted resilience, notwithstanding the potential protective heritage inherent in African ways-of-being (Theron & Theron, 2010). Since then, there has been a burgeoning interest in how black South African youths have adapted positively to a host of adversities, including marginalisation, rape and sexual abuse, indigence, HIV&AIDS, and violence (see Lau & van Niekerk, 2011; Phasha, 2010; Pienaar, Swanepoel, van Rensburg, & Heunis, 2011; Theron, 2013; Theron & Theron, 2013; Theron, Theron, & Malindi, 2013). These studies report resilience processes similar to those reported in non-African contexts and cultures: black South Africans draw on processes of attachment, meaning-making, agency, mastery, self-regulation, and intelligence to cope well with adversity (Theron & Donald, 2013). In so doing, resilience processes emulate the 'basic human adaptive systems' reported by Masten and Wright (2010, p. 222) in their explanation of positive adjustment.

However, the question of how culture and resilience processes intertwine to support the positive adjustment of black South African youth remains incompletely answered. In part, this incompletion might relate to the complexity of pinpointing what black South African culture entails (Ramphele, 2012). In the writings of Dass-Brailsford (2005), Phasha (2010), Theron (2013), Theron et al. (2013), and Theron and Theron (2013) there is an incipient understanding that the generic processes of resilience are sculpted by traditional African values of interdependence, spirituality, and duty to kin, and that these both promote and complicate black youths' resilience processes. There is also a hint that obligations to the collective are sometimes burdensome and not facilitative of resilience processes (Theron, 2013). The instrumental case studies (see Creswell, 2012) we present and interpret below extend such nascent understandings.

4.3 The Cases of Harmony and Atile

We selected the cases of Harmony and Atile because both illustrate how these young people's resilience processes are not arbitrary. Instead they reflect the values and practices of *Ubuntu*. In the original research from which these cases are drawn, no specific questions were asked about *Ubuntu* or African culture. Nevertheless, a secondary data analysis, that attends to *Ubuntu*-aligned ways-of being, shows how traditional African culture shaped Harmony's and Atile's positive adjustment to chronic adversity.

4.4 The Case of Harmony

Harmony participated in a qualitative study that investigated the school functioning and resilience of 22 students (aged 16–23 years) with childhood experiences of sexual abuse. A detailed description of this study's methodology can be read in Phasha (2010). For the purposes of this chapter, suffice it to say that Harmony was recommended to the study by a social worker at a Johannesburg-based social welfare agency. Harmony fitted the recruitment criteria in that she had: (a) experienced sexual abuse before 18 years of age, (b) was older than 14 at the time of the study, and (c) willing to participate.

After a thorough process of informed consent, the second author engaged Harmony in three in-depth, face-to-face interviews. The interviews were in English and Sesotho (Harmony's home language) and totalled 225 min. They focused on school functioning during and after abuse, as well as how Harmony coped with the abuse.

4.4.1 Harmony's Story

4.4.1.1 A Childhood of Abuse[1]

Harmony was 22 years old when first interviewed. She had been sexually abused on a number of occasions, starting with her uncle when she was 6 years old and living with her grandparents. As was typical for many South African families affected by Apartheid (Ramphele, 2002), both her parents were absent because they were working and living in Johannesburg. At the age of nine, she recalled being sexually victimised in her neighbourhood by two boys. They abused her twice, but her uncle abused her regularly until she was 12 years old. Because of their poverty, her grandmother's house was so small that the children were forced to share rooms (not beds) with adults. Harmony shared her uncle's room. The abuse continued during the 2 years that her uncle was married and his wife lived with Harmony's family. When he divorced his wife, Harmony said that she became a full time 'wife', implying that he abused her daily.

Her grandparents never knew about the abuse because her uncle threatened Harmony not to tell or cry. When Harmony eventually disclosed the abuse to her mother, she made no effort to protect her, or find new living arrangements for her, let alone confront the uncle. Harmony's mother warned her not to talk about the abuse due to the fear that it may bring trouble on the family. Bringing trouble on the collective was taboo and Harmony's status as a child precluded her contravening her mother's wishes (Nolte-Schamm, 2006).

[1] Harmony's experiences of her family's living arrangements are not prototypical of Sotho culture. Moreover, abuse by relatives is not typical of any one culture.

4.4.1.2 Caring 'Kin' Compensate

At the age of 12, her parents divorced and Harmony relocated to a maternal aunt in Mpumalanga province. During the year that she lived there, Harmony experienced no abuse, but said that she thought constantly about how she had been violated. She was a diligent student and her aunt frequently checked her schoolbooks to ensure that her assignments were completed. Her acceptance and constructive actions offered Harmony opportunity to feel connected, and supported her participation in, and mastery of, developmentally appropriate scholastic tasks (Waghid & Smeyers, 2012).

A year later, Harmony moved back to her mother who was then living with a 'boyfriend' in Gauteng province. He abused Harmony repeatedly. She became pregnant at age 14 and had an abortion. She only disclosed the abuse when her mother and another aunt enquired who had fathered the child. In response, her mother angrily called her a bitch. Her aunt hit her and called her a liar. Their response led Harmony to leave home and move to people who were willing to accommodate her.

She first stayed with caring neighbours in the same street. They were supportive and non-judgemental. They encouraged her to attend school, report the abuses to the police, and contact a social worker. Harmony's overall school performance declined during this time, her self-esteem was low, and she struggled to concentrate. Despite this, she disclosed feeling safer in her neighbours' care than in her mother's. With the support of her neighbours Harmony prioritised her education, partly to contribute to her neighbours' honour:

> I wanted to show everybody that I am not a failure. I could see that my grades were low, but my heart kept on telling me to press on. I think part of it was that I could not disappoint [neighbours] because they were there for me.

Eighteen months later other extended family took Harmony in. Although they respected kinship obligation, and gave her a place to stay, they were not emotionally supportive. They ill-treated her. For example, they derided her endlessly about the abortion and they made her clean, cook, and sell vegetables after school hours. She was not allowed to study at night as this was 'wasting electricity'. Neither was she allowed to use candles because this could set fire to the house.

One evening, when she was coming back from selling vegetables, Harmony was raped. She chose not to tell her biological family. Instead, she told her friend and boyfriend whom she regarded as caring members of her kin (Murove, 2009). They encouraged her to attend school as this would provide her with an escape route from an un-nurturing and violent context. Her friend shared her textbooks and lunch with Harmony, and helped her with scholastic tasks. Her boyfriend chaperoned her to and from school. In all of this, their humaneness epitomised *Ubuntu-values*.

4.4.1.3 Generosity to Self and Others Helps Harmony Adjust

Despite their humaneness, Harmony suffered:

> I hated myself sometimes you know. Deep down, I was terribly sad and thinking that maybe I should just . . . sell my body. I was always thinking that people of my age know nothing about sex and some have never done it. That was the last drop with [the] rape. I was thinking that maybe I was born to be used for sex, to be abused, to be raped. It really felt so bad.

However, Harmony noted that the solidarity of her friend and boyfriend sustained her. Their generosity spurred her to be similarly generous to herself and to decide:

> Enough is enough. My life was messed up but I am not going to give up . . . one day [this] will be over. I just could not afford to give up. . . . I told myself that under no circumstances was I going to allow my bad experiences to dictate my future. Neither was I going to allow my cousins and that woman [i.e. her mother] to think that I will not go anywhere. I put my mind to one thing, just one thing (claps hands): that I will pass.

Two years on, Harmony matriculated and pursued tertiary studies. At the time of the interview, she was working part-time for a Johannesburg-based telephone company and studying Information and Technology at a local college. She believed in a future – made possible via education (Gqola, 2011) – that included improved economic circumstances and security. She wanted her success to be a beacon of hope for her sister (who was also abused by her mother's boyfriends) and other vulnerable black girls in their community:

> I know I am going to achieve whatever I want. . . . I just want to fulfil my dreams, you know, for becoming someone. One day I will say I *was* like this and that. I just want to be a role model.

With the salary from her part-time work, she contributed to her younger sister's school fees. It was important to her that her sister, who was similarly abused, be educated too. She also indicated her relationship with her mother was improving, partly because Harmony acknowledged her duty to forgive (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009): "I am really doing everything to forgive her and move on with my life. The Lord has kept me up to this far and all will be fine."

4.5 The Case of Atile

Atile participated voluntarily in an on-going, multiple case study that explores the resilience processes of black South African university students from backgrounds of significant poverty. The methodology is detailed in Theron and Theron (2013). For the purposes of this chapter, suffice it to say that Atile was recruited using snowball sampling (Creswell, 2012). He was eligible for inclusion because his peers considered him well-adjusted and because he demonstrated academic success at university, despite a background of chronic indigence. Similar resilience

indicators were used in the studies by Dass-Brailsford (2005) and Ungar and Liebenberg (2011). Indigence was confirmed by Atile's reliance on the National Student Financial Aid Scheme which is reserved for South African youth from significantly disadvantaged backgrounds (see http://www.nsfas.org.za).

Guided by the prompt of: 'Please share the story of your life with me. I am particularly interested in the adversities that challenged you, and how you adjusted well in the face of these', Atile recounted the story of his resilience to the first author. On occasion she prompted Atile for greater detail, but mostly she was an active, respectful listener as is typical in narrative studies (Chase, 2011).

4.5.1 Atile's Story

4.5.1.1 Duty to the Collective Sustains Atile

At the time that Atile told his story, he was 20 and a successful second year Information Technology student at a university in Gauteng province. Tertiary education had been his life-long dream as he grew up in an environment that valorised education as a process that could lift individuals out of poverty (Gqola, 2011). In his first year, financial need forced him to walk from his grandmother's home to university, and back again. Every day Atile spent 2 h, regardless of the weather, walking to university because for him, attaining education was:

> my goal – actually it's from my background – it's helping people, being successful and sharing my success with my people. … What started this dream was the struggle, the suffering, the pain … so I believed that when I'm out of this, I have to come back and help people who were in here [who suffered similarly].

4.5.1.2 A Childhood of Disadvantage

Part of Atile's suffering was related to the death of his biological mother when he was ten years old. His paternal grandmother, with whom they were already living, raised him and his two younger brothers. They scraped by on her meagre earnings – when she was employed – and on the goodwill of neighbours and extended kin who respected *Ubuntu* values (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009). Atile's father was illiterate, and mostly drunk, and so seldom contributed to the family's upkeep. Atile, who was still desperately thin at the time of his interview, remembered seldom having enough to eat.

4.5.1.3 Caring Kin Compensate

In Atile's words: "My grandmother has been there for me all the time – through all the difficulties. She supported me financially, was a parent to me, and a friend at the

same time." He reflected that he had learned how to stand strong from his grandmother. She modelled persistence in her dogged pursuit of employment, but also told stories of her childhood that helped him put his own hardship into perspective:

> At some point I used to say "I'm suffering, yeah, I'm suffering!" But my granny's stories – when she told me her stories of her suffering then I realised mine is a little thing.

4.5.1.4 Belief Systems Support and Challenge Adjustment

Atile's grandmother was a traditional healer. In accordance with teachings about 'family communities' (Mkhize, 2006, p. 187), she believed in the power of the ancestors to protect them, and took traditional steps to safeguard her family. For example, Atile remembered her hanging special herbs around their shanty, and drizzling "medicine" to keep evil away and how, initially, this had nurtured a sense of security. He also recollected: "There was a calling – she had a dream – that I need to be protected, and so I had to wear some necklace and use her herbs – to protect me". Then, one of his uncles died, despite the many rituals their family had engaged in. This shook Atile's belief in ancestral protection. Although he remained deeply spiritual, and attended church as often as he could, he became disinclined to trust in ancestral protection. This disinclination conflicted with his family community's beliefs, but Atile was resolute.

As Atile grew older, he gained access to the local library and read avidly. He often found that his new knowledge conflicted with traditional knowledge and caused discord. His refusal to comply with his father's and grandmother's expectations of traditional circumcision was one such example:

> My Granny believed that we have to go to the mountains – to initiation school. But, the media taught me it was dangerous: there were about ten children who died there one time. So I went against my family. They didn't agree. I tried to show them the other point of view, but they didn't stand with me and listen to my point – they had their point and since they are older, it was the right point. Our tradition is that we listen to the older people. But – sometimes you check, you just weigh the things they're saying since this generation is changing, the world out there is changing ... I don't regret not going to the mountains, but I regret going against the words of my family ... My father was angry, and there was a time that he didn't even talk to me. It was painful, but ... I believed that there will be a time when he will understand.

4.5.1.5 Educational Aspirations as an Opportunity to Contribute to Kin

Atile recalled how his extended family and community placed a high premium on education. His teachers (mostly women) identified that he had potential and promoted his educational aspirations. This, and witnessing how his father's illiteracy curtailed his ability to provide materially for his family, motivated Atile:

> I wanted to go to school [university] in order for other people to listen to me ... in my family, if you didn't go to school it's like you're just a nobody. This motivated me a lot ...

> There was a time I was ashamed of my father – until I realised how important he is to me, even though he doesn't provide.

But there was a dissonance to Atile's story. Not only had he grasped that his father's illiteracy did not define him absolutely, but he had begun to be saddened by the community's judgement of his father's lack of learning. Moreover, although he was proud that he was the first in his family to have access to university, he was perplexed that graduates from his community had failed to honour the tradition of sharing success. He ended his story with the following reflection:

> In my experience, most people who are successful don't come back to us and tell us about the world out there, and motivate us. They go and buy nice houses . . . and they forget [us]. I don't want to fall in that group. I believe in *Ubuntu*. I want to at least make a difference in somebody's life, like other people – my granny, my teachers, my friends – made a difference to mine.

4.6 The Complexity of Culturally-Shaped Resilience Processes: Lessons from the Stories of Harmony and Atile

How Harmony and Atile adjusted to significant stressors shared common elements. Common to both their stories was (a) constructive connections to a broad network of supportive people, (b) tolerance, and (c) educational agency. One could argue that these shared elements embody the universally reported resilience processes of attachment, meaning-making, problem solving, agency and mastery, and self-regulation (see Masten & Wright, 2010). However, their stories offer evidence that connecting to familial and non-familial kin, being long-suffering, and pursuing a tertiary education were culturally congruent processes. Put differently, Harmony's and Atile's allegiance to a sociocultural ecology that endorsed *Ubuntu* values shaped how the universal mechanisms of resilience played out.

Harmony's and Atile's survival was intimately wrapped-up in their connections to broad networks of support. In comparison with Western studies of resilience (see Werner, 2006), neither Harmony nor Atile formed healthy nuclear family attachments. As is typical in traditional, black African contexts, and in socioeconomic and political realities that constrain black children's experiences of biological parenting (Ramphele, 2002), Harmony and Atile grew up in family communities (Mkhize, 2006). Within these kinship systems, Harmony and Atile drew more strongly on connections to supportive women. With the exception of Harmony's mother and one aunt, their stories foreground the protective role of aunts, girlfriends, grandmothers, and women teachers. This fits with the facilitative role of women in black South African youths' resilience processes as noted in a synthesis of the 1990–2008 studies of South African youths' resilience (Theron & Theron, 2010). It also reflects the historical centrality of black women to processes of adjustment in careworn, black South African communities (Muthukrishna & Sam,

2011; Ramphele, 2012). Essentially, their connectedness to these women-dominated networks obviated Atile and Harmony having to rely on formal welfare support. Furthermore, their acceptance of peers' and neighbours' solidarity embodied the *Ubuntu* understanding that interconnectedness is not limited to biological kin and extended their circles of pragmatic and psychological support (Murove, 2009; Pityana, 1999).

Similarly, the *Ubuntu* maxim of generosity to self and others is apparent in these two young people's tolerant adjustment (Nolte-Schamm, 2006; Tutu, 2009). For both Harmony and Atile, the willingness to forgive, and the anticipation of understanding, facilitated constructive coping with parental neglect/abuse and intergenerational conflict about cultural practices. Neither of them blamed family members for their suffering, or remained indefinitely angry with them. Simultaneously, they were accepting of themselves. For instance, backed by others' tolerance of her, Harmony slowly accepted that her repeated experiences of sexual violence neither defined her nor limited her potential. For both of them, self and other acceptance was a demanding process that occurred over time, and that required mindful re-interpretation of their realities.

Rather than fixate on the hardships they had had to endure, Atile and Harmony shifted their focus to achieving educational goals. Their educational agency could perhaps be explained as a typical way of negotiating an upward trajectory (Schoon, 2007; Masten & Wright, 2010), but it is also likely that their choice was shaped by the currency that education enjoys in black South African communities (Gqola, 2011; Mandela, 1995; Theron & Theron, 2013). In this sense, their culture prompted the solution to their suffering. For Atile, succeeding educationally would affirm his worth, repair his father's image, potentiate economic reward that would contribute to the wellbeing of his family community, and eventually make him a 'worthy ancestor' (Mangcu, 2011). Similarly, Harmony's educational aspirations were a form of self-care, but also other-care. Should she succeed, her story would exemplify beating the odds and in so doing motivate her sister and other vulnerable, black girls to use education to navigate towards a more secure future.

In the above discussion of the commonalities in the stories of Harmony and Atile, we detail how their culturally-relevant connections, tolerance, and educational aspirations were resilience-supporting. However, there are also elements to these mechanisms that caution against one-dimensional interpretations of how cultural heritage facilitates resilience processes (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012). Their stories offer instances of African cultural practices being shallowly observed (e.g., when extended family members honoured their duty to the collective and provide shelter, but treat the one whom is sheltered like Cinderella), or rigidly implemented (e.g., maintaining traditional initiation rites despite evidence that these need to be conducted more safely). On these occasions, Harmony and Atile did not experience *Ubuntu* in its truest sense, i.e., as an 'ethic of care' (Waghid & Smeyers, 2012, p. 11). In such instances, expectations that children tolerate derision, neglect, or other forms of mistreatment would fly in the face of the morality which is quintessentially *Ubuntu* (Nolte-Schamm, 2006; Pityana, 1999).

Mandela (1995) cautioned against romanticised generalisations of the *Ubuntu* ethic of care. Before he became a public figure, he had personal experience of occasionally being treated badly by fellow black South Africans. Atile's story resonates with this warning. Although he knew the support of neighbours, teachers, and friends, he also reported neighbourly derision of his illiterate, drunken father. Likewise, Harmony was violated in her own neighbourhood. Thus, while both Harmony and Atile's resilience was nurtured by an *Ubuntu* ethic of broad kinship and mutual support, these ideals were not respected equally by all. In both their cases, cultural heritage (e.g., belonging to a family community; respectful interconnectedness to others) did not consistently translate into sources of strength, as simplistic descriptions of *Ubuntu* sometimes suggest (Parks, 2003).

The complexity of how culture and resilience processes intertwine is heightened by the dynamism of cultural heritage. Harmony's and Atile's stories illustrate how cultural heritage is not necessarily protective over time (Rogoff, 2011). When Atile, for example, became unconvinced of the protective value of ancestral worship and traditional rites of passage he rejected these, even though this incurred familial wrath. Ironically, he relied on other cultural heritage – the expectation of forgiveness – to reappraise and cope with his family's wrath. His story shows the complexity of discarding potentially harmful/meaningless cultural heritage when the collective still consider it protective/meaningful. It illuminates how the conviction to break with culture animates individual agency, meaning-making, self-regulation, and even steeling, but also risk.

There is also potential risk in unrealised cultural expectations. When Harmony and Atile were interviewed, they were experiencing academic success. This made them hopeful that they could contribute meaningfully to kin in a way that was culturally valued. Should their educational success have faded, however, what would the cost to their self-worth be, and how would their family communities regard them? In this sense, their culture could thwart rather than facilitate resilience processes (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012).

Conclusion

The stories of Harmony and Atile signal the significance of understanding cultural context as integral to the mechanics of positive adjustment. Seen against the background of traditional African ways-of-being, extended attachments, tolerant meaning-making, and educational agency are not random ways of coping well with poverty, abuse, and intergenerational conflict. They are mechanisms scripted by *Ubuntu*.

Still, the non-arbitrariness of Atile's and Harmony's resilience processes should not be interpreted as slavish devotion to culture. Atile's rejection of ancestral beliefs and Harmony's refusal to remain under her mother's roof illustrate that they were selective about which culturally condoned resources they drew on. Thus, understanding that young people's constructive coping

(continued)

likely reflects the values, beliefs and practices that they are socialised to internalise and enact, does not denote 'rigid predestination' (Rogoff, 2011, p. 205) in how resilience processes unfold. It also does not denote that the culture in which young people are raised offers unfailingly protective values, beliefs and practices (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012).

Finally, the cases of Harmony and Atile prompt questions. Will an *Ubuntu*-infused way-of-being and -doing continue to leverage adaptive mechanisms that support wellbeing in a South African life-world that is becoming increasingly western and increasingly hostile (Ramphele, 2012)? How will educational agency support resilience processes in the long run, given that the utility of South African education is being questioned and unemployment is rife among well-qualified youth too (Du Preez, 2011)? To answer these and other questions, a sensitive, longitudinal investigation into the cultural pathways of black South Africans' resilience is imperative.

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Chapter 5
Resilience Among Zimbabwean Youths with Orphanhood

Elias Mpofu, Nancy Ruhode, Magen Mhaka-Mutepfa, James January, and John Mapfumo

Orphanhood, mostly from the loss of one or both parents due to AIDS-related deaths, is a typical experience for many Zimbabwean youth. An early twenty-first century survey reported AIDS as the cause of 1.12 million Zimbabweans becoming orphaned (National AIDS Council Zimbabwe, 2002). In Zimbabwe, 102,233 youth with orphanhood live in 48,223 child-headed families (Crea et al., 2012; UNAIDS, 2011). Although orphanage services are available, they are generally a last resort when youth lack extended family care (UNICEF, 2004). Instead, in Zimbabwean collectivist culture, grandparents have, historically, been the primary care providers (Mhaka-Mutepfa, Cumming, & Mpofu, 2014) and over two-thirds of teenagers live with grandparents (Mutepfa-Mhaka et al., 2008) or other extended family, particularly when aging grandparents die (Mpofu, Chireshe, & Gwirayi, 2014; Zagheni, 2011).

Nevertheless, extended family often experience difficulty to meet their carer responsibilities of youths with orphanhood. These relate to the socio-economic stresses associated with the demands of a modernising Zimbabwean economy

Reference to teenagers with orphanhood rather than orphaned teenagers is respectful of teenagers by placing the person before a social construction he/she may or may not identify with (see also Mpofu & Conyers, 2004).

E. Mpofu (✉)
Rehabilitation Counseling, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia
e-mail: elias.mpofu@sydney.edu.au

N. Ruhode
Psychology Department, Women's University of Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe

M. Mhaka-Mutepfa
Student Affairs, University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe

J. January
Community Medicine, University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe

J. Mapfumo
Department of Educational Foundations, Africa University, Mutare, Zimbabwe

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(Mutepfa-Mhaka et al., 2008; UNAIDS, UNICEF, & USAID, 2010). With extended families under stress, youths with orphanhood have reduced access to material resources and, by extension, the social resources and identities that such access enables. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some extended families facing poor economic prospects appropriate the estate of the deceased parents, or exploit youths with orphanhood in their care, for marginal economic gain. While such practices are criminal under Zimbabwean law, few youths with orphanhood are aware of their rights to land and/or have the capacity to enforce their rights. Nonetheless, the extended family system remains the typical system of care for youths with orphanhood (Mutepfa-Mhaka et al., 2008).

Even with the support of extended family, many youths with orphanhood are at risk. Nyamukapa, Foster, and Gregson (2003) reported that compared to children in wealthier households, children in poorer households were more likely to be orphaned, suggesting more resource deprivation than would otherwise be the case. The Zimbabwean National Plan of Action for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (Ministry of Public Service & Labour and Social Welfare, 2012) is the Zimbabwean government's social policy response to the plight of youth who have been orphaned. It provides youths with orphanhood access to basic citizenship-rights, including the right to generate a legal identity (through acquisition of a birth certificate), education, good nutrition, health services, water, and sanitation. Accordingly, the Zimbabwean government provides free education to children with orphanhood, often in partnership with civic community organizations (UNICEF, 2012). Since 2010, it also provides a cash stipend (in the form of a social support grant) to extended family caregivers of minors with orphanhood (Ministry of Public Service & Labour and Social Welfare, 2012). This grant has transformed access to material resources for minors with orphanhood and contributes to more positive self-image in youth with orphanhood because their carers view them as less burdensome economically. However, youths with orphanhood in the 16+ category do not qualify for government support grants. Their exclusion may stem from fiscal limitations faced by the Zimbabwean government. Nonetheless, these youths' inability to access material resources deepens tensions among individuals who are already at risk and contributes to Zimbabwe's ever-increasing unemployment and poverty rates (JIMAT JIMAT Development Consultants, 2010).

Potential trickle-down effects of poor access to material resources include inadequate support networks, and less opportunity to accommodate evolving social identities, or a sense of cohesion, cultural competence, and/or adherence (Gundersen, Kelly, & Jemison, 2004). Youths with orphanhood often show a poor record of school attendance and/or completion – they lack the necessary material resources for scholastic progress and/or their guardians discourage school attendance so that youths with orphanhood can carry out domestic chores for the carer family (Hallfors et al., 2012). Foster, Makufa, Drew, Kambeu, and Saurombe (1996) also observed that being an orphan was a risk factor for exploitation and abuse by carers. Lastly, these trickle-down effects possibly explain the numbers of Zimbabwean youths with orphanhood who live on the streets (i.e., about 12,000 – CYC Net, 2004).

In Zimbabwean collectivist culture, there is scarcely any discussion with youth about issues of mortality (Gundersen et al., 2004). Were youth to be better informed about their parents' ill health and mortality, they would be better prepared to network their extended family when their parents die. They would also possibly be better equipped to approach courts of law regarding the estate (if any) of their deceased parents. Allied to the non-discussion of mortality, bereavement is considered something to be accepted without support (Heath, Donald, Theron, & Lyon, 2014). Given that youths with orphanhood seldom receive counselling to deal with grief, they often experience a heightened sense of loss.

Paradoxically, orphanhood potentially presents opportunities for constructive coping with the physical and psychosocial deprivation associated with not having biological parents (Gilborn et al., 2006). However, explanations of what supports processes of resilience among Zimbabwean teenagers with orphanhood are lacking in the literature. Moreover, although there is increased awareness that African youths' resilience processes are nuanced by traditional African culture (Theron, 2013), and varied (Mathambo & Gibbs, 2009), no literature explains the resilience processes of Zimbabwean youth with orphanhood through a cultural lens. Accordingly, this chapter considers how Zimbabwean youths with orphanhood negotiate the seven tensions considered to underpin functional outcomes in contexts of adversity (Ungar et al., 2007; also see Chap. 3, in this volume) in their collectivistic cultural context in which the extended family stands as the default primary care provider.

5.1 Collectivistic Cultural Template Expectations

Cultural templates partially explain the ways in which youths with orphanhood address the tensions they experience (Ungar et al., 2007). Cultural templates refer to a society's inter-subjectively shared customs, value systems, beliefs, norms as well as common practices which pre-set behavioural expectations (Chiu, Gelfand, Yamagishi, Shteynberg, & Wan, 2010; Weber & Morris, 2010). These templates, or patterns, explain the generally similar responses by a population to social conditions and expectations (e.g., carer roles). In general, traditional Zimbabwean culture supports the expectation that extended families care for youths with orphanhood and integrate them into their familial and social networks. Where extended family systems are supportive, youths with orphanhood tend to have better life outcomes than when extended family systems are less supportive. Being supportive would include providing for the child with orphanhood and/or taking an active role in rearing him/her (Mhaka-Mutepfa et al., 2014). We propose that material and social outcomes for Zimbabwean youth with orphanhood are influenced by an implicitly held cultural template, namely a perceived burden of care.

5.1.1 Burden of Care Perceptions

Caring for youths with orphanhood is often associated with sacrifice, or a burden of care. This burden of care can be objective and/or subjective (Mhaka-Mutepfa et al., 2014; Mutepfa-Mhaka et al., 2008). The objective burden refers to actual additional, measurable demands on the material resources of the extended family that provides care for a youth with orphanhood. The subjective burden (also called 'piety loading'; *Musengwa*: Shona language; *Ngumthwalo*: Nguni/Sotho languages) refers to family members' feelings about the responsibility of taking care of youths with orphanhood. When there is a sense that this care will burden (or load) the family's capacity for goodness, resentment and grudges could follow. Youths with orphanhood's quality of life and sense of satisfaction may be lower than that of children without orphanhood when they perceive themselves as taxing (or loading) the piety, or goodness, of their extended family.

Care giving practices of youths with orphanhood in rural settings differ from those in urban settings. For example, urban households are generally more material resource intensive with pay-for service across the board: shelter, food, transportation, water, sanitary facilities, etc. The economic meltdown of the Zimbabwean economy over the past two decades means a typical family in urban areas struggles to meet its basic needs (Mutepfa-Mhaka, 2010; Ushamba & Mupedziswa, 2008). Nonetheless the cultural expectation that resources be equitably shared to include youths with orphanhood living with extended families continues to be held (Mhaka-Mutepfa et al., 2014).

In comparison, caring for youths with orphanhood might be perceived as less burdensome in rural Zimbabwean settings in which subsistence or communal farming is a key component of livelihoods. Here access to shelter, food and other amenities is communal and relatively reliable for all. This is in part because everyone in such communities contributes labour to replenish the resources for self and others. Furthermore, in the communal village setting, other family relations are accessible to the youth with orphanhood and likely to share livelihood resources. This is because historically, most Zimbabwean villages comprise close or blood relations through clan heritage and/or marriages. In this way, youth with orphanhood can participate in a denser network of social relations. Prospectively, youths with orphanhood who live with extended families in rural Zimbabwe have more access to material and social resources for developing strong socio-cultural identities than would be the case with youth in urban settings. Despite this, few Zimbabweans have only urban residence and so youths with orphanhood could have dual residence both in the urban and rural areas. Often, caregivers resident in urban areas share carer responsibility for youths with orphanhood with relations in the communal lands. This sharing of care responsibilities is in observance of the cultural tradition in which child upbringing is a collective social activity.

5.1.2 *Tensions from Accessing Resources*

In Zimbabwe, youth with orphanhood may experience psychosocial tensions from pressures to contribute to the material and relationship resource-base of their carer family. Contributions could be direct or indirect. A direct contribution could entail contributing to family income by partaking in the family economy or business trade, such as street vending or hawking. An indirect or in-kind contribution might be looking after the younger children of the carer family when the principals are engaged in work, business, social, or leisure activity (Serpell, 2011).

Compared to other children of the family, youths with orphanhood may expend more effort to receive due recognition by family carers for their assistance in replenishing livelihood resources. This is in part because subjective perceptions of children with orphanhood as "Musengwa" (piety loading) prompt an implicit psychological process of devaluing their contributions and begrudging their access to the material resources they in fact contributed to (Tanga, 2008). However, some family carers treat all children in the family equitably regardless of orphan status. Youths with orphanhood may also self-sacrifice in an effort to maintain social cohesion with carer extended family. In that way, they may 'mirror resilience' (Akello, Reis, & Richters, 2010, p. 218), which entails masking personal distress so as not to distress others and protect the social standing of extended family carers.

5.1.3 *Moderators to Resource Access*

How 'connected' youths with orphanhood are to the principal members of the extended family in which they are cared for modulates implicit piety loading aspersions on youths with orphanhood. Although there are exceptions, youths with orphanhood who enjoy closer kin relationships to their extended carer family (such as children of a parent or sibling of one of the principals of the carer extended family), would be perceived as less of a burden of care than those from a more distant relationship. Similarly, when extended family had prior guardianship of youths (while one/both parents were still alive), then once these youths know orphanhood, they may be relatively advantaged in accessing material and social resources because of historical ties.

5.2 Processes of Resilience in Contexts of Orphanhood: Preliminary Evidence

To understand the resilience processes of Zimbabwean youths with orphanhood and how the cultural default of extended family care is intertwined in this process, we carried out an exploratory survey. In particular we paid attention to how

Zimbabwean youths with orphanhood characterize their access to material resources, relationships, identity, cohesion, power and social control, and cultural adherence (Ungar et al., 2007). To this end, we also asked 18 youth to self-report on the tensions they experienced taking into account their intra-personal capabilities and inter-personal social supports embedded in extended family, religion, and community. This exploratory study allowed us to ground our cultural propositions (as explained above). No comparisons or generalisations are intended as any categorical conclusions would be misleading given the very small sample size. It is important to keep this caveat in mind when reading the findings and the implications thereof.

Among the 18 participating youths with orphanhood, 10 (55.6 %) were living in urban low-income suburbs (Mean age = 18.9 years; SD = 1.82 years). Twelve (66.7 %) were male. Ten (56 %) lived with their grandparents, while the rest lived with other extended family, or a surviving parent. Eleven (61.1 %) participants had completed high school education. Due to lack of funding, six (33 %) others had dropped out of school at the time of the study. Below is a quote from an 18 year old boy who dropped out of school because he no longer had the means to pay for his education:

> I am worried about my future. The state was paying my fees. It just stopped because they were paying for one child from each family. My younger sister is also a school dropout. They continued paying for my little brother who is in grade five. I am failing to get a job.

What follows are youths' explanations of resilience processes in a default extended family context.

5.2.1 Material Resources

Participants reported access to material resources mostly through extended family. In 14 cases (77.8 %) grandparents enabled access to financial resources. This could be because the Zimbabwean government provides social support grants for the elderly, which the elders likely would spend on their charges. Nonetheless, youth living with grandparents did not have access to any discretionary or supplemental financial allowance for leisure needs. Only one youth with orphanhood reported being employed, suggesting significant limitations in independent access of financial resources for the other participants.

All 18 youths with orphanhood reported access to shelter. Thirteen (72 %) had access to firewood/electricity and food on most days of the week. Nine (50 %) reported having access to clean water on a daily basis, but it is unclear whether this entailed fetching water from a public pump or having running water at home. Clean water is a rarity in Zimbabwean towns, given the degradation of the infrastructure in the past decade.

Thirteen (72 %) participants indicated living in communities with health care services although only three (16 %) reported having access to the health care

facilities. The rest reported a lack of financial resources with which to pay for health care. The following excerpt from a 15 year old boy illustrates how deprivation impeded access to crucial health care:

> I am always sick and suspect I am HIV positive. My aunt is HIV positive and she is on anti-retrovirals. My grandmother cannot afford the bus fare for me to go to the clinic to get tested . . .

5.2.2 Relationships

Overall, participants reported having access to positive or supportive social relationships. Seventeen (94.4 %) reported satisfying family relationships. Relational satisfaction seemed to vary depending on the attachment figure. As one participant observed:

> My granny and the uncle were kind towards me; however, the aunts and their other children were very unkind, sometimes sending me off on chores only to find that they had had meals in my absence.

Maternal orphans seemed to experience more relational disadvantages, particularly if they were raised by their paternal extended family. This might be because traditionally children whose mothers are blood members of the carer family receive preferential treatment compared to children whose deceased mother was an in-law (hence an outsider). However, maternal orphans living with maternal grandparents/family experienced more social acceptance compared to other grandchildren. As an example, a participant reported how her maternal extended family supported her practically, when her paternal relations neglected her:

> I could not get the birth-certificate required for me to sit the end of primary education school examinations. My father, who had now remarried, did not seem bothered, and only agreed to assist with his identity documents to facilitate my birth-certification after extended family relatives from my mother's side made a special plea to him.

Sixteen (84 %) participants reported being liked by their communities and experienced positive social relations with community members. Thirteen (72.2 %) reported having positive peer relationships and 14 (77.8 %) reported being well liked by their siblings. Twelve (66.7 %) reported confiding in friends rather than family, suggesting a greater reliance on the peer network for social support than on extended family.

Churches were important spaces for positive relations for 16 (88.9 %) participants (see also Mpofu et al., 2010), and these positive relations also had practical benefits. For example, a 21 year old female reported:

> Capernaum trust (faith based organization) pays for my university expenses [and] I really feel blessed. My grandmother worked so hard for me to get this assistance.

Church organizations often provide school access to Zimbabwean youths with orphanhood alongside the state education system (Hallfors et al., 2012). School as a source of social support was endorsed by only 10 of the youths (55.6 %).

5.2.3 Identity

Religious social identity seemed significant and aligned with a sense of belongingness to a faith community: 16 (89 %) participants self-reported a religious social identity and 12 (66.7 %) of these reported regular church attendance or engagement in religious practices such as prayer. Only two (11.1 %) reported that their religious identity was vested in a relationship with a higher spiritual authority or "love of God". In explaining their religiosity, the others identified more strongly with the activities or rituals of their faith organizations and subsequent sense of belonging. This sense of belonging was fostered in the sharing of the conventions of their faith (Mpofu, Hallfors, & Mutepfa, 2014; Saroglou, 2011). Belonging to a religious organization also provides a layer of social support from other congregates who comprise a spiritual family (Graham & Haidt, 2010; Mpofu et al., 2010; Nicholson, Rose, & Bobak, 2010). Church organizations in Zimbabwe are more widely trusted than secular organizations (Mpofu, 1994). Their teachings and practices (specifically in relation to charitable acts) are congruent with Zimbabwean collectivist cultural values to avail resources to the disadvantaged in society. As one participant stated:

> Our church is very supportive; they buried my father and my little brother who died last year from AIDS. They pray for us, give us clothes and pay my fees. An anonymous donor from church gave us a television set to try and entertain my mentally ill brother.

Five (28.5 %) participants perceived their religious identity as preventative of HIV and unwanted pregnancies (see also Mpofu, Mutepfa, & Hallfors, 2012). Church organizations reinforce sexual abstinence or delay of gratification teachings by family and community adding to consensual social values to inform identity. Thirteen (72.2 %) participants relied on both religious beliefs and voluntary testing and counselling to help them avoid contracting HIV (see also Mpofu et al., 2012).

5.2.4 Cohesion

A major risk of orphanhood is the loss of sense of coherence in social relationships, personal meaning, and purpose of life. Sense of coherence presupposes sense of cohesion or belief that events in one's life are orderly and meaningful (Ungar et al., 2007). Fourteen (61.2 %) participants self-reported moderate to high sense of goal-directedness suggesting an appreciation of purpose in life. Fifteen (83.3 %) considered themselves capable of self-determined action; an important personal

resource for sense of coherence. Similarly, 12 (66.7 %) reported having personal resources and also perseverance. Fourteen (61.2 %) reported self-confidence and hope for the future.

5.2.5 Power and Self-Control

Orphanhood has a disempowering effect on Zimbabwean youths' agency as it limits where/how they live and seek education (Nyamukapa et al., 2003; Nyamukapa et al., 2010; Wood, Aggleton, & Chase, 2006). For instance, only four (28 %) participants felt they had the power and social control to make important choices on issues that affected their lives. Similarly, only three (16.7 %) expressed choice over their living arrangements (whom to live with) or engagement in entrepreneurial activity to enhance their livelihood. This lack of control is important as orphanhood carries risk of labour exploitation. One girl observed:

> Because I was the oldest among the children in the [carer] family, I was seen [by carer family] as a provider of labour in the home and had to care for the younger children when the adults were off on some errands. This meant I missed some school days attending to these carer duties.

Participants did not report the power to change their status quo. Sadly, only seven (37.9 %) considered their current living conditions acceptable. Only three (16.7 %) thought they lived "ideal lives" or were getting what they wanted from life. Just one male youth observed:

> Although I miss my parents, my grandparents have been so good to me. I get everything I need. My uncles and aunts are supportive they also send us money for all our needs. They even pay for the maid and the gardener so that I can concentrate on my studies without having to bother with chores.

Only six (33.3 %) youth reported control over their educational outcomes, including opportunity for a higher education qualification and related better career prospects (see also Ainsworth & Filmer, 2002; Nyamukapa et al., 2003). The others' low education expectations could be explained by material insufficiency (13 participants reported living in relative poverty). As previously noted, government grants and funding by civic/religious bodies supports school-related expenses of many youths with orphanhood in Zimbabwe. However, even with such support, participants' control over school attendance and/or optimal school engagement could not be guaranteed due to limited government resource support and/or occasional exploitation by extended family carers. As one orphan teenage girl reported:

> A well wisher paid my school fees and another well wisher provided me with the school uniform. However, the school stationery that had been provided by another well wisher was taken away and given to other children in the family. Fortunately, the well wisher intervened after receiving information and that deprivation was corrected.

5.2.6 *Cultural Adherence*

Being-ness of "hunhu" (Shona) or "ubuntu" (Nguni/Sotho) is an important indicator of cultural adherence and maturity in Zimbabwean collectivist culture and translates into a social disposition that recognises and appreciates humanity in others; as well as appreciation of one's own humanity. Being-ness promotes a high sense of social justice combined with actions to promote communal wellbeing. Sixteen (89 %) participants reported adherence to such "ubuntu" values and its emphasis on caring for others as if they were family. As would be expected with this high endorsement of being-ness, 14 participants (78 %) considered themselves helpful to others. Thirteen (72 %) perceived themselves as responsible persons or as having a high sense of social justice.

Tentative Conclusions

Orphanhood is a complex phenomenon, not only in Zimbabwe but across sub-Saharan Africa (Heath et al., 2014). Our preliminary evidence suggests that Zimbabwean youths with orphanhood lead challenging lives, but are not easily defeated by the challenges they face. Their accounts of their resilience processes foreground a broad collectivistic cultural template rooted in extended family obligations and church belonging that seemed to be similar for youth from rural and urban areas. They confirm that where extended family systems are supportive, and where subjective burden of care is apparently low, youths with orphanhood tend to have better life outcomes. It is possible that this collectivist cultural template could explain resilience processes in other parts of Africa too (see, for example, Chap. 4, in this volume). Nevertheless, in Zimbabwe, the extended family stands as a cultural vehicle that supports and, at times, obstructs how youth cope with orphanhood.

While the youths with orphanhood surveyed for this introductory study perceived themselves as coping well with orphanhood, they also mostly acknowledged that their lives were less than ideal, and then mostly because of material insufficiency or inadequate power/control. Furthermore, even in this small sample, it was apparent that resilience processes varied by youths' living arrangements (e.g., whether they lived with maternal or paternal extended family). The evidence from this study hints at other complexities: the majority of participants accessed material resources via grandparents and most participants reported positive relationships to the families they lived with. How might their adjustment be impacted when their grandparents die? How might these participants' accounts have been different if their relationships to their families were destructive and high in piety loading? In short, although the evidence from this preliminary study points to the salience of culturally sanctioned family obligations to youths with orphanhood's resilience, it also points to the need for a robust study that will allow investigation,

(continued)

over time, into the complexities of coping well with orphanhood in traditional African contexts.

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Chapter 6
The Interaction Between Culture, Resilience, Risks and Outcomes: A New Zealand Study

Jackie Sanders and Robyn Munford

In popular discourse New Zealand is often claimed to be a 'great place to raise children'. This discourse has its origins in the creation of the welfare state following the great depression of the 1930s. At that time New Zealand championed itself as a nation that looked after people 'from the cradle to the grave' through a comprehensive, universal welfare system that provided health, education, welfare and housing services to citizens on the basis of need rather than ability to pay. As time has passed this 'myth' of New Zealand society has retained an emotional power but the realities have changed significantly. New Zealand is now a nation where there is a significant gap between the richest and poorest citizens, where the comprehensive welfare net has been almost completely dismantled and where children in particular show some of the worst statistics in the OECD, a grouping of nations used as a point of comparison in relation to key indicators of child wellbeing (see for example; Bovan, Harland, & Grace, 2011; OECD, 2011; OECD Family Database, 2011). The gap between the 'myth' and the reality continues to grow (Johnson, 2013). At a national level these statistics are suggestive of patterns of disadvantage that often coalesce around income thresholds; poverty is estimated to affect around 20 % of New Zealand children (ibid). While factors such as increased enrolment in early childhood education suggest improvement in opportunities for disadvantaged children, many communities and population groups continue to experience significant disadvantage. For example, while some statistics related to youth crime have improved overall, teenagers in low income areas fare the worst in key statistics such as national examination pass rates. Disadvantage

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J. Sanders (✉) • R. Munford
School of Health and Social Services, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand
e-mail: J.Sanders@massey.ac.nz

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also concentrates around cultural group membership; children and youth from cultural minority and indigenous groups often fare the worst in terms of overall outcomes such as educational achievements, health statistics, workforce participation rates and criminal justice statistics (see Bovan et al., 2011; Education Counts, 2000–2009). This is particularly true for Māori youth (Johnson, 2013)[1].

There are long standing debates in New Zealand about how best to respond to youth who experience the effects of cumulative disadvantage. These debates emphasise the importance of enhancing social participation in areas such as education, community activities and workforce experiences (Mackey & Lockie, 2012) and with ensuring culturally responsive practice (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2012). Teaching practices in schools and tertiary institutions have been adapted to recognise New Zealand's bicultural heritage and to also ensure sensitivity to the beliefs and values of other cultural groups (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2012). In social services particular attention has been paid to training staff to work competently with people from different cultures (Munford & Sanders, 2011). Social services have worked hard to develop cultural competence and agency practices that draw on the country's bicultural heritage (see for example http://anzasw.org.nz/about/topics/show/58-bi-cultural-partnership).

Our interest has been in understanding the topography of high risk environments to shed light on patterns of disadvantage and on differences within groups of youth experiencing significant adversity. Accordingly we completed an analysis of the connection between cultural group membership and a number of key risk and protective variables for youth in the New Zealand Pathways to Resilience Study (Pathways Study); a national study of risk and resilience, connected to the International Pathways to Resilience Study (www.resilienceresearch.org). We wanted to understand whether or not the connection between cultural group membership and broad patterns of disadvantage noted in national statistics were reflected within this group of vulnerable young people. We also wanted to understand more about the connection between cultural group membership and resilience, because of the important protective role that this has been noted to confer upon children and youth exposed to high levels of background adversity (Masten & Wright, 2010).

This chapter focuses upon data collected from youth who were recruited into the Pathways Study during 2009 and 2010 ($n = 1{,}494$). The youth included in the current analysis ($n = 605$) were purposefully selected because they were concurrent clients of two or more service systems (i.e., youth needed to be involved with were two or more of the juvenile justice, child welfare, alternative or special education and/or mental health service systems in order to be categorised as a multiple service user). These multiple-service using youth (MSU) had received services from at least two service providers in the 6 months prior to participating in the study.

[1] Māori are the indigenous people of New Zealand.

6.1 Measures

6.1.1 Resilience

Resilience was measured using the three subscales of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure – 28 (CYRM-28, Liebenberg, Ungar, & Van de Vijver, 2012). The subscales assess *individual* resources (such as personal skills, availability of peer support and social skills); *relationships with caregivers* (including physical care and psychological care); and *contextual* resources (including connection to culture, community, education and spirituality). The alpha coefficients of the three subscales for this data set, were .78, .79, and .79 respectively.

6.1.2 Risk

Both internalising and externalising aspects of individual risk were captured. This included risk of depression as measured using the 12-item version of the *Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale* for youth (CES-D-12-NLSCY; Poulin, Hand, & Boudreau, 2005); engagement in delinquent and high risk behaviour using the *Delinquency* and *Risk* sub-scales of the 4-H study of Positive Youth Development (Theokas & Lerner, 2006); and the *Conduct Problems* subscale of the SDQ questionnaire (Goodman, 1997, 2001). The alpha coefficients of the scales were .80, .87, .82, and .70 respectively.

6.1.3 Outcomes

To provide a range of perspectives on youth circumstances, three approaches were taken to measuring outcomes.

(i) Functional Outcomes

Functional Outcomes were informed by key normative, age-appropriate dimensions of youth lives including engagement in pro-social behaviour (*SDQ pro-social behaviour subscale*, Goodman, 1997, 2001). The alpha coefficient in the current study was .63. An adapted and reverse-scored list of questions from the fourth and fifth cycles of the *National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth* captured information surrounding peer activity. The alpha coefficient for this set of questions was .91. Future aspirations were measured by combining the *Satisfaction with Life* measure (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) with questions assessing youth confidence in their capacity to influence events. The alpha coefficient for this set of questions was .85. Involvement in education was assessed through a single yes/no question that asked if youth were enrolled in any school subjects at the time of the

survey. Levels of social participation were assessed using 8 questions that measured the extent to which youth were involved in community-based activities. The alpha coefficient was .65.

(ii) Opportunities

Opportunities were captured in a composite measure of youth perception of opportunities available to them and their capacity to take advantage of these. The alpha coefficient was .68.

(iii) Optimism

A sub-set of three questions reported on by Hektner (1995) assessed the extent to which youth held a positive set of feelings relating to their sense of their own futures. Because *Optimism* was a small scale composed of only three items, the mean inter-item correlation was used to measure reliability. At .38 it fell within the accepted range (Briggs & Cheek, 1986).

6.2 Sample and Analysis Procedures

Analysis focused upon the relationship between cultural group membership, risk, resilience and the three outcome measures described above. When reporting demographics, youth could list as many ethnicities as accurately described their sense of cultural identity. Youth predominantly identified with one ethnic group ($n = 392$, 67 %), approximately one third ($n = 176$, 30 %) identified with two ethnic groups and a small number identified with three or four ethnic groups ($n = 18$, 3 %). A system of prioritising ethnicity that is used in analysis of social and health data in New Zealand was used to sort data (Cormack & Robson, 2010). This involved coding any youth who identified Māori as one of their ethnicities as Māori, youth who identified Pacific as Pacific, providing they did not also identify Māori. Finally, youth who did not identify either Māori or Pacific identities, but who did identify Pākehā (white New Zealander/other European) were coded as Pākehā. This coding system accounted for 588[2] (97 %) youth who were then included in this analysis. The prioritised approach had a good fit with other research in New Zealand focusing on ethnicity and it also yielded three groups of sufficient size to enable analyses to be undertaken. By this system of coding one half of the youth were Māori ($n = 294$, 49.8 %), approximately one fifth ($n = 106$, 17.9 %) as Pacific, and approximately one third as Pākehā ($n = 188$, 3.19 %).

The mean age of the youth was 15.34 years ($SD = 1.09$); and 382 (64.9 %) were male. Just over half of the youth ($n = 346$, 58.8 %) were living with one or both birth parents. Of these, 102 (17.2 %) were living with both birth parents;

[2] The remaining 17 youth reported the following ethnicities: African, 5; Asian, 7; Middle Eastern, 4; didn't know, 1.

178 (29.42 %) were living with one birth parent, and 66 (11.2 %) were living with a birth parent and a step-parent. Ninety-one (15.4 %) were living in secure or supervised facilities such as child welfare or juvenile justice residences, 57 (9.6 %) were living in group homes, foster or adoptive situations and 35 (5.9 %) were living independently.

One-way between groups analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted on each of the dependent variables (*risk*, *resilience*, and the three outcome measures: *functional outcomes*, *opportunities* and *optimism*) with cultural group as the independent variable. The results of these analyses are outlined below.

6.3 Results

An examination of the risk profiles of the three cultural groups of youth revealed that on average Māori youth ($M = 39.30$, $SD = 14.25$) reported the highest risks and Pākehā youth the least ($M = 32.72$, $SD = 14.83$). Pacific youth risk scores were slightly lower than those for Māori youth, but these differences were not significant ($M = 35.54$, $SD = 13.09$, $p = .053$). Pākehā youth scores were, however, significantly different from those of Māori ($p = .000$) but not Pacific youth ($p = .231$).

The resilience profiles of the three cultural groups were different from the risk profiles. In terms of rank order, Pacific youth ($M = 106.88$, $SD = 16.72$) reported the highest levels of resilience, followed by Māori youth ($M = 104.66$, $SD = 14.97$), while Pākehā ($M = 99.79$, $SD = 15.71$) reported the lowest overall resilience. Pākehā youth resilience scores were significantly lower than both Māori and Pacific scores (Māori $p = .000$; Pacific $p = .000$), while the Pacific and Māori resilience scores were similar ($p = .418$).

Given the focus of this chapter, on cultural connection as an important dimension of resilience that contributes to enhanced outcomes for youth facing high levels of risk, we examined the differences in resilience profiles in more detail by considering the scores on each of the CYRM subscales for the three different cultural groups. The *individual* subscale of the CYRM revealed no differences between the three cultural groups $F(2, 587) = .07$, $p = .929$. While the ANOVA of the *relationship with caregivers* subscale indicated the presence of a small overall difference between the three groups $F(2, 587) = 3.19$, $p = .042$, the multiple comparisons did not reveal any significant differences between the pairs (Māori-Pacific, $p = .901$; Māori-Pākehā, $p = .069$; Pacific-Pākehā, $p = .090$). The Māori-Pākehā comparison on the relational subscale came closest to a significant difference but did not quite meet the .05 threshold. However, an analysis of the *context* subscale which measured aspects of *cultural and social belonging* and a sense of identity along with aspects of *spirituality/religion* and connection to *education*, revealed significant differences between all three groups $F(2, 587) = 22.27$, $p = .000$. In particular, it pointed to resilience advantages in the lives of Pacific youth ($M = 3.71$, $SD = .83$) who reported significantly higher levels of contextual resilience resources than either Māori ($M = 3.49$, $SD = .69$, $p = .025$) or Pākehā youth

($M = 3.16$, $SD = .71$, $p = .000$). Māori youth also reported significantly more contextual resilience resources in their lives than Pākehā youth ($p = .000$). Further analysis of the sub-clusters of questions within the *context* subscale revealed that for the *cultural and community connection* sub-cluster Māori and Pacific youth returned similar scores (Māori: $M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.74$; Pacific: $M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.82$, $p = .998$); results that were significantly higher than those reported by Pākehā youth ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.78$, $p = .000$). Pacific youth also reported a significantly stronger sense of *spirituality/religion* connection ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 1.20$) than either Māori ($M = 2.73$, $SD = 1.03$, $p = .000$) or Pākehā youth ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 1.01$, $p = .000$). Māori youth also reported significantly higher scores on this sub-cluster than Pākehā youth ($p = .013$). The differences on the *educational* sub-cluster were less pronounced across the three groups although the ranking of scores from Pacific as the highest, Māori in the mid-range and Pākehā youth as the lowest remained. Pacific and Pākehā youth scores on this sub-cluster were significantly different from each other (Pacific: $M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.24$, Pākehā: $M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.18$, $p = .005$) but Māori ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 1.14$), located midway between these two points, were similar to both Pacific and Pākehā youth (Pacific: $p = .127$, Pākehā: $p = .205$).

Research has focused on resilience in the lives of youth facing risks because it is anticipated that resilience may serve a mediating role between the risks youth face and their achievement of positive outcomes including opportunities to participate in community life and to develop a positive future-oriented focus (Berliner, Larsen, & de Casas Soberon, 2012; Lipspitt & Demick, 2012; Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012). Accordingly, the analysis next examined patterns in the three different outcome measures according to cultural group membership.

In terms of rank order, Pacific youth fared the best in terms of *functional outcomes* ($M = 11.24$, $SD = 2.91$), followed by Māori youth ($M = 10.82$, $SD = 2.77$); the differences between these two groups was not significant ($p = .364$). On the other hand, Pākehā youth reported the lowest *functional outcomes* ($M = 10.34$, $SD = 2.38$) and this lower overall score was significantly different to Pacific youth results ($p = .021$) but not to Māori youth results ($p = .105$). While there was clear break in functional outcome scores such that Pākehā youth reported achieving significantly lower *functional outcomes* than their peers who identified Pacific cultural group membership, these differences were not apparent for either of the other two outcome measures: (*Opportunities*: F 2 (587) = .763, $p = .467$; *Optimism*: F 2 (587) = .779, $p = .417$).

6.3.1 Differences Between Cultural Groups

This analysis suggests some interesting relationships between risk, resilience, and three different types of outcomes for vulnerable youth from different cultural groups. This is particularly so given established patterns of disadvantage in New Zealand that show a strong relationship between membership in Māori and Pacific groups and poor outcomes (Bovan et al., 2011; Education Counts, 2000–

2009). For this sample of MSU youth, risk was distributed unevenly. Māori youth reported the highest levels of risk, Pacific youth were located between Māori and Pākehā in terms of risk, and their risk levels were similar to both Māori and Pākehā. Māori and Pākehā youth, however, were significantly different from each other. The finding that Māori youth had the highest risk is consistent with national statistics on key indicators of risk such as youth offending and prosecution rates, which are higher for Māori youth (Johnson, 2013).

While the risk measure reflected more general statistics in relation to culture in New Zealand, the same could not be said of the resilience measure. There was a marked shift in the rankings within this group of youth facing elevated adversity and stress. Here, Pākehā youth reported the lowest overall resilience and their differences from both Pacific and Māori youth were significant. As with the risk measures, Pacific and Māori youth reported similar scores, but in this case, their overall scores were significantly better than those reported by Pākehā youth. Analysis indicated that those dimensions of resilience that were particularly sensitive to aspects of cultural adherence and identity accounted for these differences. It appeared then that Māori and Pacific youth had access to some specific protective processes (Ungar, 2011) particular to their ethnic cultural group membership that were not available, or were not able to be accessed and used by this sub-group of Pākehā youth.

It was noteworthy that with regard to functional outcomes the three cultural groups retained the relative rankings observed in relation to their resilience scores: Pacific youth scored highest, followed by Māori and then Pākehā youth. While this analysis does not establish causality, given the central theoretical arguments in resilience research whereby resilience processes constitute critical resources that mediate risk thereby potentiating enhanced outcomes (Ungar, Liebenberg, Dudding, Armstrong, & Van de Vijver, 2012), the results here suggest a potentially powerful role for cultural identity as a key resilience resource available to Māori and Pacific youth. In the case of Pacific youth it appeared that the slightly lower levels of background risk compared to Māori may have produced additional benefits in terms of outcomes; benefits that were also available to Māori in amounts sufficient to moderate their higher levels of risk. Pākehā youth however, reported the lowest outcomes despite the fact that they had lower levels of overall risk than either Māori or Pacific youth. This lower level of risk did not appear to be sufficiently low to compensate for their lower overall resilience when it came to the functional outcome measure.

There were no notable differences between the three groups on either the *opportunities* or the *optimism* outcome measures. Participating youth were all involved with numerous support services and it may have been that these services played a role in activating other support networks that provided access to meaningful opportunities and a sense of hope about future possibilities (Masten & Wright, 2010).

6.4 Thinking Differently About Culture and Resilience

We might have assumed at the beginning of this research that as members of the dominant cultural group in New Zealand, the Pākehā youth scores would have reflected a consistent pattern of advantage when compared to both Māori and Pacific youth. This is certainly the case when considering patterns of relative advantage in the general population where Pākehā consistently return more favourable scores on measures of wellbeing than Māori or Pacific youth. However, other patterns emerged in the case of this subpopulation of vulnerable youth exposed to atypical amounts of adversity. In terms of resilience and functional outcomes Māori and Pacific youth returned better scores than their Pākehā risk-exposed peers. The resilience scores suggested that there were culturally anchored resilience processes available to Māori and Pacific youth facing high risk that either were not available, or were not able to be accessed and used by their Pākehā peers. In this study these included Māori and Pacific youth reporting a stronger role played by cultural, spiritual and religious meaning systems. Other work has demonstrated the strong connection between resilience processes and positive outcomes for youth exposed to risk (Ungar et al., 2012). Given this, the higher Pacific and Māori youth scores on the CYRM *context* subscale would appear to offer an explanation concerning the comparatively better outcomes reported by high risk Māori and Pacific youth.

There has been a focused effort upon recognising the unique socio-cultural context of New Zealand (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2012). This has involved affirming the cultural heritage of Māori as the indigenous people of this country as well as celebrating the unique and diverse heritage of other cultural groups. For the Māori and Pacific youth in this study it is possible that they have been able to benefit from this emphasis within social, health and educational systems by building a sense of connection to cultural heritage and involvement in culturally anchored activities. These young people, despite high exposure to adversity in their social ecologies, may have found opportunities through services, for instance, to make connections with others that enhanced their identity and provided cultural belonging allowing them to make sense of their experiences and develop strategies for managing their risky environments (Masten & Wright, 2010). Their stronger connections with facets of cultural identity and belonging produced buffering effects (Macfarlane, 2004; Mila-Schaaf, 2010) that appeared to translate into an enhanced capacity to achieve outcomes even when confronted with elevated risks.

The high *resilience* and *functional outcome* scores of Pacific youth are suggestive of key cultural values such as the importance of gaining an education and of contributing to one's community (Keddell, 2006). These facets were also present although to a lesser extent for Māori youth. Aspects of cultural identity and social belonging thus brought advantages for Pacific and Māori youth. While they reported better *functional outcomes* than their Pākehā peers, these outcomes were nonetheless well below those achieved by youth from the general population. As a point of comparison we examined the *functional outcome* scores for a

demographically matched group of youth (MCG) from the general population who completed the same survey instrument. The mean functional outcome scores for the MCG were significantly higher than the mean overall scores for the MSU youth (MSU: $M = 10.76$, $SD = 2.7$; MCG: $M = 12.45$, $SD = 2.7$; $t = (1,208) = -10.8$, $p = .000$). The risks Pacific and Māori MSU youth faced, risks that were greater than those MSU Pākehā youth, still cast long shadows forward in terms of limiting their capacity to achieve important developmental milestones. For Māori and Pacific youth, the results of this analysis suggest a critical need for service providers to focus carefully upon decreasing exposure to chronic risk whether this is through specific culturally anchored or more general support processes (Ungar et al., 2012).

The results for Pākehā youth are perplexing given that in the general population Pākehā experience particular advantages across wellbeing measures (see for example, Henare, Puckey, & Nicholson, 2011; Pearson, 2012). This comparative advantage was not apparent when considering either *resilience* or *functional outcomes* in this sample of youth, although they did report some advantages in terms of facing lower levels of risk. There is some evidence to suggest that Pākehā youth may not perceive themselves to be part of a cultural group (Bell, 2004) and therefore that they may not have perceived the more specific cultural questions to be relevant to them. However, the *context* subscale of the CYRM also captured information about social belonging and cohesion in addition to questions concerning cultural identity. This suggests that there were broader aspects of the social ecologies of Pākehā youth living with high risk that undermined their contextual resilience and which would appear to have also contributed to lower overall *functional outcomes* (Ungar et al., 2012). In terms of working with vulnerable Pākehā youth to improve outcomes the attention of providers may well be best focused upon building a stronger sense of identity and connection to family and community.

Given the findings reported here, it is appears important for service provision to take careful account of the way in which risk, resilience processes and culture interact and to calibrate interventions differently depending on the way in which these three facets of youth lives interact in each particular situation. As Masten and Wright (2010) have argued, improving the prospects for vulnerable youth requires significant targeted interventions that respond directly to risk, and in this study, elevated risks were observed for Māori youth. Achieving positive change for these youth will not be a simple process of implementing a behaviour modification plan or framing intervention in terms of risk reduction. Significant change of the level required for youth facing the highest risk can only be achieved where both individual and environmental risk is addressed directly, relationships with key adults are carefully managed, and cultural and other meaning systems understood in terms of their impact upon the ways in which youth are able to make choices and decisions. On the other hand, interventions for Pākehā youth may need to be less focused on the overall quantum of risk and be more concerned with identifying new relationships that facilitate development of emotional connection and a stronger sense of positive cultural identity. For Pacific youth, it would appear that attention might need to focus upon risk, but to also pay attention to the cultural values and culturally embedded relationships which this analysis suggests constitute a rich source of meaningful support.

Conclusion

The findings presented here suggest a complicated set of interactions between culture, risks, resilience and different types of outcomes in this subpopulation of vulnerable youth. For Pākehā youth, the absence of cultural and other contextual protective factors appeared to play a role in their comparatively low levels of *functional outcomes*; which suggested they did not have wider networks of kin to call upon and they did not have access to cultural connections that supported the development of a stronger identity. Having low risk and being Pākehā did not improve the chances of good outcomes. For Māori youth culturally anchored resilience processes appear to have moderated the high levels of risk. Pacific youth gained advantages in terms of both having access to the best combination of resilience resources, particularly those that were culturally anchored, and also from not having the highest level of overall risk. This combination of cultural resilience resources and mid-range risk was linked to the highest ranking for *functional outcomes*, outcomes moreover, that were significantly better than those reported by Pākehā youth. For all of these youth, however, functional outcomes were significantly lower than in the general population.

Service providers need to respond to this complex relationship between risk, resilience and culture by developing interventions with individual youth that directly respond to the specific aspects of their social ecologies that do not serve their development well in order to create opportunities for improved outcomes. The findings suggest that we need to recognise that the population of vulnerable youth in our communities is not homogenous (Foster & Spencer, 2011) and cultural identity is one important dimension along which it is demarcated. The possibility also needs to be entertained that patterns of overall advantage and disadvantage that apply at national population levels may not hold up when looking at specific populations that face adversity. This means we need to think differently about each of the cultural groups we work with rather than responding in uniform ways: for Māori and Pacific youth there are cultural resources to draw on that can be used to address risk, but for Pākehā youth attention may need to be given to creating resources and relationships that will provide them with a stronger positive sense of identity and cohesion.

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Chapter 7
Cultural Pathways to Resilience: Informal Social Support of At-Risk Youth in China

Guoxiu Tian and Xiying Wang

Given the emphasis in Chinese culture on social attachments, this chapter pays attention to how informal social support fosters Chinese youths' resilience. It documents how Chinese youth resilience is supported culturally by informal networks in general (e.g., families, peers) and relational resources in particular. To do so, it uses findings from an inductive analysis of 220 semi-structured interviews with teenagers, aged 13–19, living in Beijing, and at risk for poor outcomes given contexts of poverty, parental divorce, chronic illness, and urban migration. These interviews were conducted as part of the five-country Pathways to Resilience study (see www.resilienceresearch.org). Most interviewees were referred by school teachers, community leaders, and staff in children's activity centres who believed these children were doing well in spite of the adversities they encountered in their lives.

Although formal, service-based pathways to resilience are very important, they do not fully account for resilience processes: youth development also relies in part on relevant and meaningful contextual resources that are informally available (Bott, 1971; Ungar, 2008). In the West, informal support often means physical resources such as recreational activities and drop-in centres, as well as relational resources within families and communities (King et al., 2003). Many studies show the importance of recreation in keeping adolescents constructively engaged, and

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G. Tian (✉)
Department of Sociology and Social Work, School of Political Science and Law, Capital Normal University, Beijing, China
e-mail: tgx37886@126.com

X. Wang
School of Social Development and Public Policy, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

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away from high-risk activities such as alcohol and drug use, violence, and theft (Ellis, Braff, & Hutchinson, 2001), raising youth self-esteem (Dumont & Provost, 1999), and creating opportunities for the development of leadership and other skills (Allen, Cox, & Cooper, 2006; Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006). In China, however, communities have limited resources for providing recreational activities for youth. The activities that are available can be divided into free and fee-based opportunities. The majority of Beijing communities have free outdoor exercise facilities, as well as gardens and playgrounds. In addition, the government recently called for schools and universities to open their sports facilities for use by local residents. As these facilities are usually quite simple, they only meet youths' simple recreational needs. Moreover, teenagers regard using community-based physical resources as old-fashioned. This perception is reinforced by the fact that the elderly are the most frequent users of these facilities.

Fee-based services primarily comprise indoor playgrounds, stadiums, and gyms, which are operated by sports organizations, youth associations, or private enterprises. Users can participate in a variety of activities, such as judo, fencing, yoga, dancing, martial arts, billiards, and crafting. Participation in these activities requires parents to pay. Although such requisite financial contributions are not an issue for middle class families, they are often more than low-income families can afford. In summary, in China there is not a strong culture of recreation, underscoring the need to rather explore relational resources within families and communities as major form of informal (and culturally congruent) support for marginalised or vulnerable youth.

Chinese culture emphasizes inter-relatedness. Chinese people categorize interpersonal relationships into three layers (Fei, 1985). The first one, at the core, is the family relationship. Between family members, there is no issue of protection of interests and help is mostly provided unconditionally. When the relationship between family members is bad, there is a whole gamut of negative emotions, such as depression, anxiety, anger, and hostility, but often, also stoicism, because traditionally conflicts within the family should not be exposed. The second layer consists of relationships between acquaintances, such as classmates, neighbours, colleagues, and *tongxiang* (i.e., someone who is from one's hometown; fellow clansmen). Between acquaintances, there is the expectation of support, and even though they can be accommodating, it is often conditional and dependent on reciprocity. The third layer of relationships is not often addressed in traditional Chinese culture: that between strangers. Relationships between strangers are often characterized by a business-like approach. Among strangers, there is rarely caring; more likely, the pursuit of self-interest is at a premium, while mutual trust is low.

In the sections that follow, we draw on interview-generated data (as mentioned at the outset of this chapter) to illustrate how familial (level one) and social relationships (level two) supported the resilience processes of Beijing-based teenagers. We start with family support – nuclear and then extended – before considering relationships with acquaintances and peers.

7.1 Nuclear Family Support

In Chinese families, inter-generational relationships are sometimes more important than conjugal relationships and parent-child relationships are often valued more than the relationship between couples. Our data shows that nuclear family support (mostly from parents) plays an influential role in teenagers' lives, especially when they encounter challenges, such as chronic illness, school bullying, poverty, disabilities, and problems in interpersonal relationships. As illustrated below, familial support helped youth to negotiate various tensions associated with resilience processes (Ungar et al., 2007), including gaining access to material resources, experiencing power and control, and affirming a positive identity and sense of cohesion.

7.1.1 Interdependent Financial Assistance and Material Aid

Chinese teens are not materially or financially self-sufficient. They need financial assistance and material aid to fulfil their basic needs, complete their studies, and to be socially active. Families are the first place they turn to for help, often without any hesitation. However, when they are aware that their families are financially strained, youths respect the limited nature of their family's resources, and make an effort to be self-supporting.

Yang[1] is a 16 year old boy studying at a vocational high school. The school has signed an internship agreement with a factory to provide early work opportunities for the students, and lay a solid foundation for their finding work after graduation. Yang and other students are not paid an actual salary, receiving only cash stipends for their meals, and are thus still dependent on their families for money to cover their basic needs. Yang's parents are rural farmers, their finances are meagre, and his sister is still in middle school. Therefore, as Yang explained in his interview, he could not bear to add to his parents' financial burden, choosing instead to go without food at times in order to cover his other needs. When his parents learned of this, they borrowed from friends and relatives, and mailed a fixed amount of money to Yang every month. Yang was extremely moved by this, and actively sought overtime factory work to make some extra money and lessen his burden to the family. He said,

> My parents have a very tough time, I can't be the one to add to their pressure. I'm always thinking about how I can save a little bit, or endure some things, in order not to trouble them. I am really hoping for the factory to retain me after a year, so I will have a job and be able to contribute to the family in some way.

[1] All the names in this chapter are pseudonyms in order to respect participants' rights and privacy.

Yang's hope illustrates *xiao* (filial piety). In China, the concept of *xiao* is a culturally embedded expectation that encourages interdependence between adult children and their parents – in some ways this could be interpreted as children reciprocating their experiences of nuclear family support; in others, endorsement of *xiao* could, perhaps, be related to the deficient Chinese social security system and inadequate pension for the elderly, particularly in rural areas. Still, as promoted by Confucius, parents expect their adult children to look after them when they grow old and are not able to make their own living. Legally, Chinese law regulates that it is adult children's responsibilities to take care of their elderly parents.

7.1.2 Psychological Support and Emotional Comfort

Study participants often acknowledged nuclear family as psychologically supportive and a source of comfort in trying times. For example, Su was diagnosed with bone cancer when he was 13. At the time of the interview, he was 17, and attending school intermittently. Four years of treatment had left his family bankrupt and debt-ridden. His parents sacrificed everything in order to help him, even quitting their jobs to care for him permanently. More importantly, his parents continued to hope for his recovery, to actively encourage him, and praise him for his resilience. They faithfully read his blog, and through this outlet, expressed their confidence in, and love for, Su. Su reflected,

> I've gotten a lot of help from many people since falling seriously ill. If I had to say whom I am most grateful to, then of course it would have to be my parents. They have given so much for me, especially my father. My illness has been a huge burden on them, but my parents have never once complained. My father always says that I am very gifted, and he often reads what I write online.

Yu's story is similar. Yu, aged 17**,** is a diligent high school student, and currently one of the top students in her class. However, since Year 3 of high school, she experienced severe psychological distress. Her studies went through good and bad patches, her grades waxed and waned, and her peer relationships also fluctuated. This left Yu miserable and emotionally exhausted. Her parents' understanding and support helped her through. She recalled,

> Mother would call me every night, even if there wasn't anything specific to talk about, she would find comforting words to say to me. She has never added to my stress, and often says that 'you work really hard, and no matter what your exam grades are, your father and I know that you've tried your best.'

7.1.3 Teachers of Life-Lessons

Chinese nuclear families, like western ones, are responsible for teaching youth valuable interpersonal skills and lessons that will support progress in life (Kandel &

Andrews, 1987). For example, Meng is a teen who migrated into the city to find work, but as a newcomer, he ran into trouble even in such trivial daily tasks as finding his way in a new place or taking the bus. He did not know anyone in the city or have any friends there. When he felt down, the first thing he did was to call his parents back home for support. He drew particular strength from his father's words. Meng described one such instance,

> I remember it was already past nine in the evening, and I was still milling around in the city, so I started calling my father. At that moment, however, I thought of what he once said to me, that when faced with difficulty, one must first calm down and assess the situation, in order to clear one's head. I kept telling myself to 'calm down, you need to calm down,' and after clearing my head I was able to determine which bus I needed to take, and rushed back to my *danwei* (work unit).

7.2 Extended Family Support

Support from extended family, i.e., grandparents and other relatives, can also promote Chinese adolescents' resilience processes, especially when parents are divorced or have migrated to cities to find work. The examples below illustrate how extended family members helped youth to negotiate various tensions, including gaining access to material resources, offering supportive relationships and experiences of social justice, and promoting youths' power and control (Ungar et al., 2007).

7.2.1 Grandparents as Surrogate Parents

As in many other cultural contexts, Chinese youths often regard parental discord, separation and divorce, and associated fighting for custody, and/or remarriage, as challenging. They report feeling neglected, lonely, hopeless, and depressed, and aware of financial crises, and the decline of life quality (Han & Wei, 2004; Ji, 2002; Xu, 2001). Such problems often create a sense of distance between family members, and fractures in parent-child relationships. Some children even experience problems meeting their daily needs, if they are neglected following the divorce. In these instances, grandparents often replace biological parents, and actively parent neglected or cast-aside grandchildren as their children. They provide them with care and a sense of family. However, as grandparents grow older, their illness and mortality may impact adversely on teens' lives.

For example, Pan, aged 13, is a middle school student. When he was 3 years old, his parents divorced. Both his mother and father remarried, and moved on with their new families. Pan moved in with his grandmother, and she became the only person he could rely upon. He recalls,

> In primary school, I lived with my grandmother and slept together in the same bed. After middle school, I had my own room. Grandma is over 70 now, very old. We lead a pretty simple life and we take care of each other. I feel that she is the dearest person to me in the world. She has always been hoping for me to get into university. I am worried she will be lonely if I leave for high school or college.

Wei, a 14 year old middle-school student, is always laughing and has a warm and gregarious personality. When he was 4 years old, his parents divorced, and because his mother did not have housing of her own, the court gave custody to his father. His father remarried when Wei was six, so he was placed in his grandparents' care. For the past 8 years, his grandparents have raised Wei. His father rarely visits. His mother chose not to remarry and misses him, but she has no stable housing. She visits every weekend, helping to wash Wei's clothes and clean the grandparents' bedroom. Wei says of his situation,

> I prefer it this way, the two [parents] not together, so they don't fight- it's very peaceful. I'm used to being with my grandparents – we've all adapted to living together. I haven't really given thought to what will happen when they get older; they're around 60 right now.

One reason why grandparents are willing to parent grandchildren relates to the traditional Chinese concept of family: the next generation is not only seen as the birth of new lives, but also as the flag-bearers for their families' rise and fall, success and failure. Grandparents' willingness to accept parenting responsibility for grandchildren is likely related to traditional expectations for children to "bring glory [honour] . . . [to] one's family/ancestors" (Fei, 1985; Hwang, 2004). Without good parenting, this expectation is jeopardized. Consequently, as Goh (2006) states: "child rearing is very much a joint mission between parents and grandparents in China" (p. 10).

Because "carrying on the family line" is very important traditionally, gender discrimination, such as preference for sons, is sometimes perpetuated (Das-Gupta, Zhenghua, Bobua, Zbenming, & Hwa-Ok, 2002). At times this tradition-based discrimination disrupts parent-child/grandparent-grandchild bonding. For instance, Meng is a 16 year old high-school student whose parents divorced when she was around 4 years old. Her paternal grandparents were displeased that they had a granddaughter rather than a grandson. Thus, her mother took her to be raised by her maternal grandparents. After primary school, due to her mother's job instability, Meng was returned to her father's care. However, her close relationship with her maternal grandmother remained an important source of emotional support for her. Meng reflected,

> When I was just born, my paternal grandparents were not happy that I was a girl, so they put me with my maternal grandparents. My mother didn't really take care of me either; it was mainly my maternal grandmother who raised me. I still visit them once a week, and miss them, but I don't feel the same way about my mother. This makes her unhappy.

7.2.2 *Close Relatives Extend Support Networks*

Vast numbers of working age Chinese adults are migrating from rural to urban areas to find work. Their school-aged children typically remain behind, in the care of grandparents, or other relatives (mostly aunts and uncles). These children are known as "left-behind children". According to a report published by the All China Women Federation [ACWF], (2012), the number of left-behind children totals 61 million (i.e., 21.9 % of all Chinese children), 40 million of which are under the age of 14. Additionally, 30 % of these left-behind children have parents who have been working as migrant labourers for more than 5 years. According to a 2004 study conducted in Meishan City in Sichuan Province, 81 % of the local 3,118 left-behind children, were taken care of by grandparents, and 18.13 % by relatives and friends (Women's Federation in Meishan City, Sichuan Province, 2004).

Wang, a 17 year old high school student, is one such left-behind child. Her mother left the family, and her father is a migrant worker. She lives with her disabled uncle (her father's older brother). After living together for many years, she sees her uncle as a father figure. Wang says of their relationship,

> Yes, my uncle is my "father", closer than my biological father. . . . My uncle lost his vision when he was just 18, and even though he has never seen me, he has raised me like his own daughter.

Relatives also support rural children who come to the city seeking job opportunities once they are older and/or not able to continue their schooling. Typically relatives employ these children, or introduce them to possible employers. For example Min, aged 18, works for her uncle, who plays the role of guardian. She operates a newspaper stand in the city's downtown area, and her co-worker is also a relative. The two take turns eating, resting, and operating the newsstand, with no other help. Min says,

> This is my uncle's news stand, and he brought us over from our hometown. She (pointing to another girl) is also a relative. My uncle has helped us a lot: renting our apartment, buying daily necessities, and caring for us on a regular basis. We're all relatives, so we cannot treat each other too poorly. Because he brought us out here, he must take care of us. He also pays our salary, but doesn't give us the whole thing, only some pocket money. The rest he sends back to our hometown for our parents to manage, because he's afraid that we'll spend it recklessly. This is good for us, and helps us save some money.

7.3 Networks Outside the Family

7.3.1 *Tongxiang Widens Familial Circles of Support*

Chinese society is predicated on relationships: family and locality are important considerations in social interactions and interpersonal relationships (Hwang, 2004; Yang, 1995). *Tongxiang* places emphasis on relatedness by virtue of shared

locality. *Tongxiang* means that two people come from the same place in China (i.e., province, city, county, or village). Because people from the same place share similar experiences, living conditions, and lifestyles, they are more likely to understand one another and be supportive of one another. Many rural inhabitants have migrated to cities, and often the biggest motivator for leaving their land and villages is knowing someone from their home-town/region who has already moved. In this way, *tongxiang* is a valuable initial resource: when people enter big cities looking for opportunities, their first point of contact is often a distant relative or neighbour, and *tongxiang*. Knowing someone in the big, chaotic metropolis becomes their landing base.

For example, Ma, a 17 year old, quit school after middle school, and had nothing to do in her hometown. Later, she was able to draw on *tongxiang* to find a job in Beijing. She approached a store manager who had shared geographical links with her family. Ma recalled, 'Because she (the store manager) and my mother had a good relationship, she recommended me to be hired when the store was looking for people.'

Likewise, Fang, also 17 years old, works in a factory. She and four peer colleagues were recruited by a *tongxiang* supervisor. Fang talks about the *tongxiang*,

> This *tongxiang* is good to us – it was he who referred us here. It is our first time in Beijing, and we don't know anyone here, so we were pretty unhappy when we first got here. He helped us rent a place, as well as taking care of us in the factory, teaching us how to do certain tasks, reminding us what we should pay attention to, and smoothing things over when we make mistakes. We couldn't make it without him.

7.3.2 Friendships and Romantic Relationships Compensate for Absent Sibling Ties and Familial Support

China's one-child policy has been in effect for over 30 years, and urban children born in the 1980s and 1990s are mostly from single child families (Greengalgh, 2008). They have never experienced sibling relationships, yet they desire bonds with brothers and sisters. Many youth actively replicate sibling relationships with their close friends, and call each other "sworn brother" and "sworn sister". The concept of "sworn" relationships is rooted in traditional Chinese culture that values inter-relatedness. It refers to close relationships that, although not bound by blood, transcend family ties and are sometimes even stronger than kinship. A "sworn" relationship implies intimacy, compensates for a lack of sibling ties and is a strong source of financial and/or emotional support, even more so when teens cannot rely on their parents.

Hao (18), for instance, is an apprentice at a barbershop. His dream is to become a highly skilled barber, and open his own barbershop 1 day. His sworn brothers facilitate his dream:

> When I don't have money, I just borrow it from friends. I like to make friends and chat with them, and whenever I have problems, I'll always tell my friends. When I have free time, I'll hang out with friends, whether it's eating together, going to internet cafes, or occasionally singing karaoke. Singing in Karaoki Club is very expensive though, and a bit over our budget to be honest, so we usually just go to internet cafes. I feel glad that at stressful times, or when I need someone to talk to, I can always turn to my friends.

For Hao, and other teens, close friendship helps solve financial problems, and provides emotional support and companionship. Similarly, Li, 17 years old, a high school student, relies on his sworn brothers for emotional support. His mother is retired due to chronic illness, and he and his father are constantly locked in conflict. Li believes that he is his father's "whipping boy" but feels helpless to change this. He understands his father's stress levels are high, but finds it hard to have a close relationship with him and so avoids him as much as possible. Sharing with friends is also a good way to release the stress he associates with his family. He explained,

> When I run into problems, I will tell my friends about it. Even though I realize they usually can't help me, I still feel much better after talking with them. I'm not afraid of revealing my family's issues in front of my friends, because I don't feel that they mock me; they quite understand, and sometimes even help me relieve stress.

In China, teen dating is discouraged at school, and there is a strong "*zaolian*" (too early to date) discourse within the education system (Wang & Ho, 2011; Wang & Wang, 2013). Nevertheless, romantic relationships provide emotional support for teens, especially when they have problems at home. For example, Jing is a 15 year old, third year middle-school student, who is at odds with her parents because she doesn't like the way they've raised her and because of high levels of parental conflict. She interprets the relationship with her boyfriend as her source of shelter, comfort and support. He fulfils the role of a sworn friend. She believes that he understands and cares for her best, and she talks to him about all her worries. Even though he sometimes cannot help her fix the problem, he provides encouragement. Jing describes their relationship in the following way:

> I believe that my boyfriend is the person who understands me the most, even though he's only a year older... His family is better off than mine, and he has quite a good relationship with them, unlike my hurtful relationship with my parents, which makes me really jealous of him. Maybe it's because he comes from a warm and healthy family, so he is very understanding, and very patient with me.

Discussion and Conclusion

Renowned Chinese sociologists, Fei Xiaotong (1985), addresses the Chinese cultural emphases on inter-relatedness in his "Differential Mode of Association" theory, also called *Chinese Social Relations* and *Hierarchical Patterns*. His theory foregrounds that in Chinese culture, support follows a hierarchical pattern. Essentially, as could be deduced from the teen accounts reported above, circles of concern and support start from the immediate family, then extended family, and relatives, before extending to *tongxiang* and friends.

(continued)

Thus, the structure of Chinese interpersonal relations is built around a "family-oriented" core, which is founded on blood and kinship ties, with less emphasis on the self and self-interest. In knowing that family relationships are their foremost resource, and in making use of this resource, many Chinese teens are supported to adjust well to financial, psychosocial, and other threats. No matter what obstacles or setbacks they face, the Chinese culture of unconditional support of offspring potentiates parental protection when youth are threatened by adversity.

On the periphery of the immediate family is a complementary support system made up of grandparents and relatives. Aligned with cultural beliefs relating to bringing glory to the family line, grandparents are usually proactive surrogate parents. In giving their grandchildren a sense of family, as well as love and warmth that parents could/would not provide, grandparents hope to continue the family heritage. In the process, teens are mostly not neglected and experience collaborative support in resolving material, emotional, social justice, and identity related tensions (Ungar et al., 2007).

Besides blood and kinship ties, Chinese people place a high emphasis on local ties. With China's rapid economic development and increasing levels of urbanization, a growing number of youth are leaving their ancestral homes and going to cities to live among strangers. They astutely, and sometimes almost instinctively, seek out, and rely on, connections with *tongxiang* to build a support network and facilitate resources for future development. This is a prominent characteristic among teen migrant workers who rely on the Chinese culture of *tongxiang* for a sense of community and solidarity in urban cities.

Beyond family, blood, and local ties, Chinese teenagers who have adjusted well to hardship are capable of establishing their own individual support system through close, or sworn, friendships and romantic relationships. Friends may allay financial and material difficulties, but true emotional understanding requires a closeness that transcends ordinary friendship. Youth who experienced the loneliness of one-child families often have a strong desire for sibling relationships and so transform friendships and even romantic relationships into close ties resembling kinship. For many resilient Chinese youth, the concept of intimate bonds with peers is one not based on blood ties but instead on "sworn" brotherhood or sisterhood. This compensates for the close relationships that are lacking in their lives and bridges the traditional levels of kinship and strangers that traditionally shaped how Chinese people relate to others. This type of 'sworn' support illustrates how culture is adapted by successive generations.

Despite the positive youth accounts in this chapter, there are suggestions that the Chinese culture of interconnectedness can complicate youths' resilience processes. We acknowledge that sometimes this culture can be

(continued)

unsupportive, or even destructive, of resilience (e.g., Meng's story). Sometimes too close a relationship could be a way of controlling and limiting youth's space and choices (e.g., Li's story). Youth in urban and rural areas may face different problems: in cities, caregivers sometimes are overprotective and focus a lot on daily living rather than spiritual communication, and children and youth feel that they are "caged golden canaries" without privacy and freedom (Naftali, 2010). In the countryside, youth (especially those left behind) may face the risks of under-protective caregivers. Moreover, because of the culture of interconnectedness youth need to always consider their families' and extended families' expectations and attitudes when they make decisions (e.g., Yang's story). In summary, therefore, relational pathways characterize Chinese youths' resilience, but need even deeper scrutiny to understand their complexity.

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Chapter 8
"It's Just Part of My Culture": Understanding Language and Land in the Resilience Processes of Aboriginal Youth

Linda Liebenberg, Janice Ikeda, and Michele Wood

Situated within a socio-economic and political history of colonialisation and marginalization, Aboriginal youth in Canada continue to be confronted by environments that are harmful to their overall psychological and social development (Adelson, 2005; Galabuzi, 2004). Families continue to live with immense social and economic strain (Reading, Kmetic, & Gideon, 2007), while communities remain poorly resourced (Gaye Hanson & Smylie, 2006; Loppie Reading & Wien, 2009). Factors of intergenerational trauma, often coupled with unresolved historical grief, compound current socioeconomic marginalisation of Aboriginal families and communities (Galabuzi, 2004). Collectively these risk factors interact in complex non-linear ways, reducing the psychosocial well-being of many Aboriginal youth (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; Mignone, 2003; Mignone & O'Neil, 2005). Amidst these risks, connection to traditional culture has been identified as a strong predictor of improved mental health for Aboriginal youth in Canada (Chandler & Lalonde, 1998; Mignone & O'Neil, 2005), where increases in social and cultural connection are related to reduced chronic mental illness and other harmful outcomes (Mignone, 2003; Mignone & O'Neil, 2005; Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003).

This chapter reviews the impact of policy and governance aimed at reviving engagement with traditional culture, including language, on informal community-based programming within remote communities under the pervue of the Nunatsiavut Government, the body representing the Inuit of Labrador. Our focus is on the effect of this revival on the resilience processes surrounding youth living in these communities. The impact of these policy and program approaches will be reviewed by means of data gathered from youth participating in the Pathways to

L. Liebenberg (✉) • J. Ikeda
Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada
e-mail: Linda.Liebenberg@Dal.Ca

M. Wood
Department of Health and Social Development, Nunatsiavut Government, Nain, NL, Canada

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Resilience study. Specifically, the way in which young people's engagement in cultural activities, including speaking Inuttitut, impact the resilience processes surrounding youth will be explored quantitatively. These processes will then be expanded on through the presentation of a qualitative case study. We use Ungar et al.'s (2007) seven tensions to guide our discussion and inform our review of the data. Ungar's (2008) definition of resilience (see Chap. 3) aligns well with Aboriginal models of health and life learning and as such is appropriate to furthering an understanding of how cultural engagement shapes the resilience processes of Aboriginal youth. The history of colonisation and cultural genocide that dominates the recent history of Aboriginal communities, combined with current efforts on the part of communities themselves to revive local traditions, create tensions for many youth that pull them between dominant and traditional way of living.

8.1 Context

Inuit communities within the Land Claim area of the Nunatsiavut Government are no exception to the social, economic, political and cultural realities mentioned above. Situated in Central and Northern Labrador, these communities face additional challenges stemming from the isolation that characterises remote regions of Northern Canada (Brody, 1987), aggravated by seasonal and climate changes that amplify isolation and compound adversity (Warren, Berner, & Curtis, 2005). These challenges manifest in rates of school dropout, substance use and abuse, domestic violence, depression and anxiety that are significantly higher than the national average (Reading et al., 2007). Therefore, while most Inuit residents consider their communities safe places to be (Centre for Indigenous People's Nutrition & Environment, 2010), youth living there continue to confront significant challenges (Reading et al., 2007). The deleterious effects of this are seen, for example, in youth suicide rates that are amongst the highest in the world (Health Canada, n.d.). Suicide rates in Inuit communities have historically peaked when substantive reorganisations by colonising authorities have occurred within these communities (Hicks, 2007). Resulting disconnection from culture that these reorganisations created continues to be seen today. As Hallett, Chandler, and Lalonde (2007) state, "the generic association between cultural collapse and the rise of public health problems is so uniform and so exceptionless as to be beyond serious doubt" (p. 394).

Addressing the legacy of historical trauma together with the impact of continuing marginalisation is a particular concern of the Nunatsiavut Government, the regional public government now overseeing communities within the Land Claim area of Nunatsiavut. Established in 2005, the Nunatsiavut Government is responsible for the health, education and cultural affairs of these communities, and functions with limited autonomy to the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The primary objectives of the Nunatsiavut Government are the preservation of Inuit culture, language, and the environment. Cultural preservation

is particularly important given the history of cultural genocide and settlement of a semi-nomadic, eco-centred, hunting-fishing people (Kirmayer, Fletcher, & Watt, 2009). Within this broader mandate, the Department of Health and Social Development (HSD) seeks to "protect, promote and improve the health and well-being of Labrador Inuit through the provision of community-based programs and services, advocacy and collaboration" (http://www.nunatsiavut.com/index.php/health-and-social-development/health-a-social-development-overview). Key components of the HSD approach include the practice and promotion of Labrador Inuit culture and language, empowerment, and the promotion of respect for self and others. In addition to activities and programs directly provided through HSD are collaborative initiatives offered with non-Nunatsiavut Government programing such as the Junior Canadian Rangers Programme (JCR) run by National Defence and the Canadian Forces. The aim of JCR is to promote traditional cultures and lifestyles by offering a variety of structured activities to young people aged 12 to 18 living in remote and isolated communities.

8.2 Resilience, Inuit Culture, and Inuit Youth

Ungar's (2008) pluralistic definition of resilience, implicates contextual resources in the resilience processes that facilitate good outcomes for youth. Contextual resources include relationships, supports available in communities and the larger life worlds that effect the allocation of resources. This pluralistic definition mirrors the collectivist worldview of Aboriginal life philosophies which emphasise a wholistic understanding of support, including ancestors, language, and the environment (Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips, & Williamson, 2011). Central to Ungar's definition of resilience are relationally-based processes of negotiation for and navigation to resources. The focus on interactions, positions resilience as a fluctuating process that is non-linear, relational and collaborative, again reflecting Aboriginal understandings of resilience (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008). Furthermore, Ungar's definition is culturally bound, highlighting the importance of resources, responses and interventions being relevant and appropriate to youths' cultural realities. In practice, this means that understandings of resilience and doing well must be locally derived. Such an approach aligns well with approaches called for by Indigenous scholars (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; Kirmayer et al., 2011).

In addition to interactional and collectivist understandings of resilience, connection to land and place is central to Aboriginal culture and wellbeing (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; Kirmayer et al., 2011; Lalonde, 2003; Reading et al., 2007). For Aboriginal people, understanding who you are and where your strengths lie is inextricably linked to the land. As Patricia McGuire (2010), a member of the Anishinaabe nation, says, "Knowing who I am and where I came from gives me a solid foundation in my life" (p. 119). In this way, Indigenous frameworks of resilience are inherently land and place bound. They are reflected in traditional land use actions such as hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. As McGuire

(2010) further explains, "Indigenous place-based resilience requires understanding the traditions and sustained relationships with the land" (p. 123). The oral tradition of Aboriginal communities, where life learning resides in stories (Battiste, 1998; Kirmayer et al., 2011), has important implications for the role of language in the resilience processes of Aboriginal youth (Battiste, 1998; Lear, 2006). The Canadian Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures (2005), for example, argues that "people's philosophy and culture are embedded in their language and given expression by it. Language and culture are key to the collective sense of identity and nationhood of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples" (p. ii). They further explain that language embodies the relationship of Aboriginal people with the land, and that it is understood that "land" includes historical and spiritual relationships with traditional territories. For Aboriginal youth, loss of or disconnection from language implies disruption of cultural connection (Battiste, 1998). This notion is supported by the research findings of Hallett et al. (2007) which demonstrated that "indigenous language use ... is a strong predictor of health and wellbeing in Canada's Aboriginal communities" (p. 398).

These components – interaction, collectivity, connection to land and language – are clearly demonstrated in the Assembly of First Nations' First Nations Wholistic Policy and Planning Model (Reading et al., 2007). The model emphasises self-governance, reflecting capacity of the individual, while simultaneously placing community at the centre of the model, underscoring notions of self in relation to community. Integration of the medicine wheel draws in the full spectrum of culture and context, accentuating the value of spiritual, cultural, environmental, social and economic health in addition to considerations of the physical and the mental. This draws attention to "the totality of existence, the interconnectedness of relations, and is symbolic of life ... everything in the universe is part of a single whole" (Vukic, Gregory, Martin-Misener, & Etowa, 2011, p. 69). Positioned around the medicine wheel, are social determinants of health that include, but are not limited to, connection to language and culture, land and resources as well as environmental stewardship. Inclusion of the four cycles of the lifespan (i.e., child, youth, adult, and elder) points to the continuity of, and pathways through, life; rendering "outcomes" temporal markers of resilience processes. Encapsulated in a circle of social capital, this model reflects the process of negotiation contained in Ungar's social ecological definition of navigation and negotiation (see Chap. 3 of this volume).

Social ecological models of pathways to wellbeing are reflected in Inuit culture (Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips, & Williamson, 2012). Central to Inuit understandings of resilience are the continuous transactions of individuals with the environment, where the land is seen as the central provider of subsistence both through activities (i.e. hunting and gathering) and actual nourishment (i.e. consumption of food). In so doing, environment is literally incorporated into the body (Kirmayer et al., 2009). Contemporary conceptions of Inuit connection to land, position land and land-based activities as promotive of healthy outcomes and, therefore, as integral to resilience processes (Kirmayer et al., 2009). This profound connection to land is also observed, for example, in the way place names reflect cultural and historical knowledge (Collignon, 2006), implicating language in Inuit

memory (Nuttall, 1992). Furthermore, Inuit culture has an oral tradition where elders are knowledge keepers. The need for engagement in traditional land-based activities as well as hearing the stories of elders, implies the need for youth and elders to interact.

Tennets of Inuit culture are captured in the Inuit Lifelong Learning Model (Canadian Council of Learning, 2007). The model outlines the key characteristics of holistic lifelong learning and includes indicators of good outcomes. It informs resource provision and programing in order to ensure that both are better aligned with Inuit culture. It reflects the fundamental interconnectedness between the individual, community and environment and foregrounds that individual growth is dependent on the broader context which includes relationships with others (including ancestors). It requires connections to culture (including land and language) and *sila* (life force and connection to environment). The model also reflects the cyclical nature of life, the process of navigation (traveling through the course of life) and negotiation (interactive give and take between the individual and the community) where the individual and the broader context are implicated in successful outcomes. Importantly, the model integrates the Inuit philosophical principles of *Inuit Quajimajatuqangit* (IQ) – these embrace all aspects of Inuit culture and are based on natural, cultural and communal laws. The 38 values and beliefs included in the model (such as sharing/*Pikutigiktot*, generosity/*Tunikatahutik,* resourcefulness/*Toktohanik Atokpaktot*, taking the long view/*Kungiaktot Takiomik*) provide a framework for social organisation, as well as a worldview and sense of social expectations that equip individuals and communities with related life-skills (Canadian Council of Learning, 2007).

As previously mentioned, it is engagement with these aspects of culture (specifically land-based activities and language) that the Nunatsiavut Government is aiming to facilitate for youth via the implementation of policy through community-based programing.

8.3 The Resilience Processes of Inuit Youth

Qualitative and quantitative data from the Pathways to Resilience Project illustrate how engagement in cultural activities shapes the resilience processes of Inuit youth living in North Coast communities of Labrador. Two hundred and twenty eight youth participated in the quantitative component of the study by completing the Pathways to Resilience Youth Measure (PRYM). Of these youth 119 (52 %) were girls, and the average age of youth was 15 ($M = 15.42$; $SD = 1.81$). The PRYM contains various validated scales and sub-scales that collectively allow for the assessment of the personal and contextual risks youth face, the formal and informal resources available to them, as well as the resilience processes that surround them (Ungar, Liebenberg, Armstrong, Dudding, & Van de Vijver, 2013). Resilience is assessed using the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-28; Liebenberg, Ungar, & Van de Vijver, 2012), a social ecological measure of the individual

(α = .75), relational (α = .82) and contextual (α = .79) resilience processes that surround youth. Each of the three sub-scales of the measure has related sub-clusters of questions that allow for a more in-depth assessment of nature of these processes.

Using the question "what language(s) do you speak at home" (as an indicator of cultural engagement), as a grouping variable (with responses around use of Inuttitut used to create a binomial variable of yes/no), independent samples t-tests were conducted on the sub-scales and sub-clusters of questions of the CYRM-28 to assess how such cultural engagement impacts various resilience components. Results show statistically significant differences between those youth who speak at least some Inuttitut ($n = 31$; M = 40.77; SD = 6.38) and those who speak no Inuttitut ($n = 197$; M = 37.64; SD = 6.54) with regards to resilience scores on the context sub-scale, $t(226, 40.279) = -2.517$, $p = .013$. These differences are seen particularly in the spiritual sub-cluster of contextual questions (which include, "Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me" and "I think it is important to help out in my community") $t(226, 41.172) = .357$, $p = .005$ (Inuttitut speaking: M = 3.36, SD = .89; Non-Inuttitut speaking M = 2.85, SD = .94) as well as the cultural sub-cluster of contextual questions (which include, "I have people I look up to"; "I am proud of my ethnic background"; "I am treated fairly in my community"; and "I enjoy my community's traditions") $t(225, 40.109) = -2.272$, $p = .024$ (Inuttitut speaking: M = 4.53, SD = .62; Non-Inuttitut speaking M = 4.26, SD = .62). In all instances, youth who speak Inuttitut score higher on these resilience processes than youth who do not (see Table 8.1). These findings underscore the significance of language in the sense of connection to community and culture for youth, raising questions regarding how this engagement amplifies resilience processes.

A review of a qualitative case study of youth from one of the participating communities, who does speak some Inuttitut serves to clarify this. The youth,

Table 8.1 Differences in connection to culture and context between Inuttitut speaking youth and non-Inuttitut speaking youth

CYRM sub-scale and sub-cluster of questions	*t*-test	Youth who speak some Inuttitut ($n = 31$)		Youth who speak no Inuttitut ($n = 197$)	
		M	SD	M	SD
CYRM Context Sub-scale	$t(226, 40.279) = -2.517$, $p = .013$	40.77	6.38	37.64	6.54
Spiritual sub-cluster	$t(226, 41.172) = .357$, $p = .005$	3.36	.89	2.85	.94
Cultural sub-cluster	$t(225, 40.109) = -2.272$, $p = .024$	4.53	.62	4.26	.62

John,[1] was selected for the qualitative component of the study due to his risk and resilience scores on the PRYM. Specifically, he scored above the median on the total risk score (17.14), demonstrating heightened risk, but also in the top quartile (25 %) of resilience (87.14), reflecting greater resilience processes.

John was 17 at the time of the interview. In the months preceding the interview three of his cousins and his grandfather had died. His cousin who had died most recently had committed suicide. John has a history of substance abuse, but at the time of the interview had not been using for several months. He makes it clear that it is the relational supports around him that are central to the choices he makes, and the ways in which he manages the risks confronting him. At the core of these decisions is his respect for self and others. After failing two grades, and having to repeat both years, he explains that he not only intends to complete school, but wants to graduate in the academic stream that will allow him access to college and a better job. It is clear that John can turn to his teachers for support and assistance, "they just helped me, all the time". These relationships appear to have enhanced John's engagement with school, where he will "take advantage" of the educational opportunities available to him. He credits his teachers with equipping him with knowledge of how to use his education to further his employment opportunities. In addition to teachers, John also credits his family in this process. They are his motivation: "Coz I want a good job, and help my family when I'm older. ... if they need help with money or anything, I'll just give it to them." John also has a strong support network amongst his friends and family. Following the suicide of his cousin, he relied on the emotional support of friends and family to remain anchored, "to live my life the way it was before". John's narrative shows very definite and close ties to his community, "there's no place like home". He explains that he feels safe in his community, everyone knows everyone. Consequently, he has access to a strong support network. Importantly, he is a part of this network, and contributes by assisting when others need help: "if an elder needed someone to chop wood I would go chop their wood. And if someone needed their place shovelled out I'd shovel out their place."

While John talks of his relationships as his "main coping skill", it is important to note that these relationships and the related choices he makes are characterised by and reflective of Inuit culture as encapsulated by *Inuit Quajimajatuqangit* (*IQ*) and the cultural components that the Nunatsiavut Government seeks to promote in the communities it represents. By capitalising on the opportunities made available to him through engagement with education and community activities he can improve his own life (resourcefulness/*Toktohanik Atokpaktot*; Taking the long view/*Kungiaktot Takiomik*). A core inspiration for this, however, is his contribution to his family and his broader community (sharing/*Pikutigiktot*; generosity/*Tunikatahutik*). He is also responsive to (Listening/*Tuhakataktot*), and respectful of (*Pitiahutik*), his parent's expectations of him, "my parents didn't want me to quit school, and I listen to them and did my best from then on." His decisions around his

[1] Pseudonym

health-related behaviour, and specifically his decision to stop using drugs, stems from both this responsiveness to family expectations and his responsibility (*Pihimayakhait*) as a role model to his baby niece, "[its] something that she would not like seeing me doing . . . I just thought about my niece, and my mom didn't like me doing it, and my dad didn't like me doing it, and my sisters didn't like me doing it, so I thought about them and I quit." John draws on these relationships and supports to move forward (*Hivumongaoyut*) following tragedies, like the death of his cousin. And finally, John's sense of community support is embedded in an understanding of reciprocal teamwork (*Havakatigihutik Havaktigiyait*). In response to the question "if you ever needed help or if someone needs help in the community, how helpful is the community?" John says:

> . . . They're pretty helpful.
> *Janice (Interviewer)*: Yeah?
> *John*: And I'd be helpful for them.

While his life story reflects philosophical tenets of *IQ,* his engagement in activities provided by the Nunatsiavut Government (i.e. Teen Night) as well as other culturally related activities like JCR demonstrates how he learns these values, in part, through formal programing. While attending Teen Night is an invaluable source of support for John, "I know they're always there for me and it's someone to talk to", engagement in the group seems to foster sharing (*Pikutigiktot*), mutual respect (*Pitiahutik*) and trust (*Okpinaktok*), "we trust each other . . . and we know not to tell other people whatever is happening on, in different people's lives." In addition to engagement in these formal activities he also participates in cultural activities informally, for example learning to speak Inuttitut at school.[2] John also discusses at length his love of hunting. While he does not mention this explicitly, some of his enjoyment may stem from his previous engagement with JCR where he would have learned skills necessary for both hunting and navigating his way through the local environment successfully. With his father, he hunts a wide variety of traditional game. John talks about the challenge of finding the patience (*Nutakiokataktot*) it requires, "the waiting is the ugly part". He is aware that this is one of the life skills he takes away from hunting. He also explains that hunting is important to him because "it's just part of my culture". When John says, "we eat [jumpers – white-sided dolphins]. It's very good" his discussion of hunting reflects incorporation of environment into the body that Kirmayer et al. (2009) speak of. Finally, John recognises the value of intergenerational connectedness (*Eliat Elagikatigiyut*) and the continuation of cultural lessons, volunteering that he would "like to pass it on to my children [and] grandchildren."

[2] Aboriginal languages are not offered as a formal course in Canadian schools. In this particular community the school has provided access to a computer-based language program, which youth may use to learn Inuttitut informally.

8.3.1 Discussion

Reflecting on John's narrative and how it relates to *IQ,* Ungar et al.'s (2007) seven tensions can provide a framework highlighting the resilience processes that surround him. The seven tensions include access to material resources; relationships; identity; power and control; cultural adherence; social justice; and cohesion. These tensions help to link John's narrative back to the spiritual and cultural sub-clusters of questions in the CYRM-28. It is clear from John's narrative that he balances adherence to global notions of success (staying in school, getting good grades, going to college, getting a good job and earning a good salary) with adherence to his local traditional Inuit values (supporting his family and broader community, making choices to be a good role model). His time is balanced between the attainment of these goals (by going to school) and engagement in the activities that sustain him (relationships and cultural engagement in activities such as hunting, and his commitment to learning his language). It is John's adherence to Inuit culture, however, that forms the foundation of the resilience processes that surround him and therefore the degree to which he adheres to the more dominant global culture. Specifically, his long term vision (*taking the long view*) motivates John to access the material resources made available through school, education and employment by means of his *resourcefulness*. These resources become vehicles for his attainment of long term goals, goals that are embedded in his adherence to traditional culture and values.

John's sense of *trust* in the relationships that surround him, combined with his willingness to *share* of himself with his community – to engage in the reciprocal *teamwork* that is required to ensure community cohesion – are reflective of his experience of social cohesion: he is part of a community that is larger than himself. Because of his integration and participation in family and community, where he has a role to play and something to contribute, John has the experience of social justice. His sense of cohesion and justice is related to his willingness to *listen* to and be *respectful* of those around him, adults and elders in particular. From these experiences, John also has a sense of *responsibility* to self and others. It is the interaction of these components, his access to relationships, his sense of cohesion and consequent access to resources, which characterise John's traditional cultural adherence. Perhaps most importantly, it is also these components that contribute to John's sense of power and control over his life and the choices he makes as well as his identity as an Inuit. John's sense of identity is reflected in his sense of intergenerational purpose, his capacity for self-appraisal, and his connection to Inuit beliefs and values.

While John is seen to make important decisions with regards to his life, it is crucial to recognise that much of what informs John's resilience processes and his personal outlook on life comes from others: his father took him hunting – John did not request this; Inuttitut lessons are provided at school, unasked for by John; teachers volunteer their support, help and advice, John did not have to actively seek this. These resources are made readily available to John through the

relationships that surround him. Importantly though, the resources made available to John are not forced on him, there is space enough for his voluntary engagement with these relationships and resources, demonstrating the agentic, interactive and relational components of resilience processes.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the potential that policy and governance aimed at the revival of traditional culture on the capacity of informal programing has to facilitate the resilience processes of youth in remote Aboriginal communities. Explored from the perspectives of youth, two aspects of importance to resilience processes are highlighted. First, the importance of language and land-based activities for Inuit youth is reinforced. Importantly, this chapter highlights the ways in which these cultural components shape resilience processes. Second, data from the study suggest that programs implementing policy aimed at cultural revival should do so in ways that are flexible. Such an approach is better able to reconnect Aboriginal youth to their culture because youth can integrate these cultural components into their daily activities.

To summarise, the Nunatsiavut Government's goal of preservation of culture, language, and environment are reflected in John's story. The mandate of the HSD to protect, promote and improve the health and well-being of community members through policy and programing are seen in the related resilience processes at play in John's life. Youth like John have the opportunity to develop a personal identity embedded in traditional Inuit philosophies and values due to the support of activities that promote cultural engagement. The presence of Nunatsiavut Government policy, as reflected through service and programming provision, can be seen in John's life. Quietly weaving a cultural support for communities provides the members of the community a basis from which to move forward. As interconnectedness is at the heart of Inuit culture, this personal development manifests in community cohesion and development, appropriately reinforcing the resilience processes that surround youth living there.

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Chapter 9
Stigma, Stereotypes and Resilience Identities: The Relationship Between Identity Processes and Resilience Processes Among Black American Adolescents

Davido Dupree, Tirzah R. Spencer, and Margaret Beale Spencer

The experiences of African-American youth (i.e., black youth of African descent who are born and/or raised in the United States [US]) reflect ethnic, regional, socioeconomic and generational *diversity*; *not a monolith*. Yet, in the US, the experience of race is a unifying factor among all these youth. This observation shouldn't imply that youth sharing a racial or ethnic status react identically to challenges and opportunities. Instead this observation recognizes that adaptations to day-to-day challenges represent both unique and culturally patterned behaviours (see Lee, Spencer, & Harpalani, 2003). In fact, *humans live culturally*—engaging in nuanced, complex culturally-informed behaviour patterns and culturally-influenced identity processes (see Spencer, 2011).

As suggested by Ungar et al. (2007), there is a need to understand the culture-specific ways in which resilience, or positive adaptation to adversity, is encouraged. In this chapter, we assert that identity processes are the mechanism through which black American children and adolescents internalize and sustain these culturally-informed adaptations to day-to-day, racialized challenges. In the following section, we provide a foundation for our consideration of a racial group as a cultural group and the processes by which racialized experiences interact with culture to influence developmental outcomes.

As Carol Lee offered (personal communication, August 25, 2013), "people participate in multiple cultural communities of practice informed by broader

D. Dupree (✉)
Department of Psychology, Community College of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA, USA

Applied Psychology and Human Development program, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA
e-mail: dd2pree@gse.upenn.edu

T.R. Spencer
Nemours Health and Prevention Services, DuPont Children's Hospital, Wilmington, DE, USA

M.B. Spencer
Department of Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA

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macro levels—e.g. nation, ethnicity, religion, gender, class, and age cohort—and by equally compelling micro level practices—e.g. playing video games, basketball, etc. These multiple communities of practice may entail different meanings and allegiances from us." Thus, our use of the term *culture* supports speculations about life course duration. Specifically, culture reflects membership in macro level social groups that are relatively permanent. But culture also represents finite everyday practices and processes—including movement in and out of microlevel social groups as one is involved in different daily activities.

Black people in the US have a history of stigma (internalised and structural) that is ever present but which may be experienced in unique ways depending on the character of the different cultural communities in which one lives and functions. This stigma has manifested in different forms at different time periods including but not limited to institutionalized slavery, racial discrimination, racial segregation, and cultural racism (Jones, 1972; Mitchell, 2008). Link and Phelan (2006) define stigma as the result of five interrelated processes: (1) an individual being identified and labelled based on human differences (for example, skin colour); (2) an individual being stereotyped in a way that links that label to undesirable characteristics (for example, black skin is dirty, Blacks are unintelligent); (3) an individual being labelled in a way that separates the stigmatized individual from the individuals providing the label; (4) an individual being discriminated against and losing status; and (5) the individuals doing the labelling exercising more power than the individual being labelled. While these processes are clearly defined, Link and Phelan (2014) further explain that these stigma processes are often hidden and not easily recognized by casual observers. This is an important point to the current discussion because stigmatization can take on multiple forms; some more obvious and some less obvious.

Racist institutions such as slavery and "Jim Crow" segregation laws may no longer exist nor be publicly sanctioned in the US. Nevertheless, there are different formal and informal policies and practices of institutions and individuals that help to sustain the inequities, disparities and social hierarchies that resulted from those original race-based institutions and laws (Markus, 2008). Consequently, "lessons" about race and racial hierarchy are embodied in the practices of institutions and learned implicitly (i.e., individuals infer essential differences among racial groups based on outwardly observable differences in language, behaviour, developmental outcomes, economic stability, etc.—see Dupree, 2010). As such, they may not be easily linked to the race-based discriminatory or oppressive practices from which they originated (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Yet, they still represent racialized experiences to which black Americans adapt, individually and culturally. The resulting "adaptive culture" reflects their collective experiences as members of a disfavored racial group in the United States. For instance, Smedley and Smedley suggest that differential health outcomes for Blacks reflect adaptations to their experiences of race as a social construct and racism as a result of the stigma reflected in the racial hierarchy of the US.

Garcia-Coll and her colleagues (1996) suggest that adaptive culture is the result of interaction between historical forces and current ecological demands.

Differences in cultural values, knowledge or practice can lead to different responses to the demands and stressors of racialized contexts. For instance, socialization by the family is a primary mechanism through which culture is transmitted. Yet, cultural values, knowledge and practices may need to be adapted in response to the specific ecological demands and stressors to which individuals are exposed in their day-to-day activities. Parents of black children may use ethnic-racial socialization strategies to help their children anticipate and/or respond to structural and subsequent internalised stigmatization. Hughes et al.'s (2006) review of research on ethnic-racial socialization suggests that ethnic-racial socialization can be roughly grouped into the following typology: (a) cultural socialization, (b) preparation for bias, (c) promotion of mistrust and (d) egalitarianism and silence about race. Hughes et al. propose the use of the term "ethnic-racial socialization" to acknowledge that there is much difficulty in distinguishing when and under what conditions families need to have ethnic versus racial discussions with their children. Cultural socialization represents efforts to sustain intergenerational cultural knowledge and practice. The use of this type of socialization likely represents attempts to counteract implicit mainstream influences on child development that are opposed to or ignorant of black cultural knowledge and practice. More specifically, cultural socialization may be a response to what Jones has termed "cultural racism" (1972) in which marginalised groups' cultural knowledge and practices are devalued in deference to the cultural knowledge and practices of the higher status group. The remaining types of ethnic-racial socialization are clear responses to the existing racial hierarchy in the US. Preparation for bias helps the developing child to anticipate and respond to racial bias. Promotion of mistrust is intended to increase children's awareness that members of other racial groups may not always have their best interests in mind. Finally, egalitarianism and silence about race represent efforts to raise children to "ignore" the existing racial hierarchy.

Hughes et al.'s review further suggests that caregivers will provide different types of socialization based on the age and/or gender of the child, immigrant and/or socioeconomic status of parents, and the demographic make-up of neighborhood. Perhaps most importantly, there appear to be differential outcomes based on the type of socialization employed. Ethnic-racial socialization is associated with lesser likelihood of using passive coping strategies in response to racism (e.g., acting as if one did not hear a racist comment) or strategies that suggest internalized racism (e.g., accepting racial stereotypes as true). But findings on the effects of specific types of ethnic-racial socialization are much more nuanced. For example, in adolescence, being taught about racial barriers is associated with higher school grades (Bowman & Howard, 1985, as cited in Hughes et al., 2006). In contrast, being taught about racial barriers in childhood is associated with lower grades (e.g., Smith, Atkins, & Connell, 2003). Apparently, children are not yet cognitively able to give proper meaning to, or cope with, such knowledge about racial barriers.

Language development is also affected by adaptive culture. Specifically, in their study of ethnic differences in language development, Leventhal, Xue, and Brooks-Gunn (2006) found that immigrant black American children (primarily of African and Caribbean descent) had higher verbal scores than non-immigrant black

American children. The difference is partially explained by family and maternal characteristics. This finding is most concerning because in each of the other ethnic-racial groups (Asian, Mexican, Puerto Rican and White) in their study, the non-immigrant American children had higher verbal scores at baseline than their immigrant American counterparts. At age 6, growth rate in verbal proficiency was faster for non-immigrant black American children, suggesting they were "playing catch up." Between ages 13 and 14, the growth rate was the same. By age 16, the growth rate was faster for immigrant black American children, suggesting greater continued development. One potential explanation for these differential outcomes in language development is "segmented assimilation" (Portes & Zhou, 1993). "Segmented assimilation" in the US can be reflected in diverse trajectories of assimilation. For instance, high SES and high achievement across generations suggests economic and academic assimilation and cultural assimilation parallel to the white middle class. Low SES and no achievement gains or declines across generations suggests neither economic nor academic assimilation, and furthermore, cultural assimilation into an underclass. Achievement gains across generations supported by limited exposure to American culture and focus on traditional values suggests economic and academic assimilation but not cultural assimilation.

The non-immigrant black Americans in Leventhal and colleagues' (2006) study illustrate the low SES and low achievement and assimilation into an underclass. Ogbu and Simon's (1998) concept of the involuntary minority helps to further explain these differential outcomes for non-immigrant black Americans. Involuntary minorities—whose ancestors arrived in the US through the mechanisms of colonization and/or slavery—remain at social and economic disadvantage because of their sustained disfavored status. They would fit Obgu and Simon's involuntary minority typology in that they are different from the dominant group in race and ethnicity, they are less economically and academically successful compared to voluntary minorities, and they experience "greater and persistent cultural and language difficulties" (p. 166).

The experience of segmented assimilation and involuntary minority status can both function as risk factors for black children and adolescents. In the following section, we describe a conceptual framework that specifies the developmental processes that link risk and protective factors to coping and identity processes and which, in turn, affect resilience processes.

9.1 Spencer's Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory: A Conceptual Framework for Considering the Interactions Between Race and Resilience Processes

Figure 9.1 summarises Spencer's phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST) (Spencer, 1995, 2006, 2008).

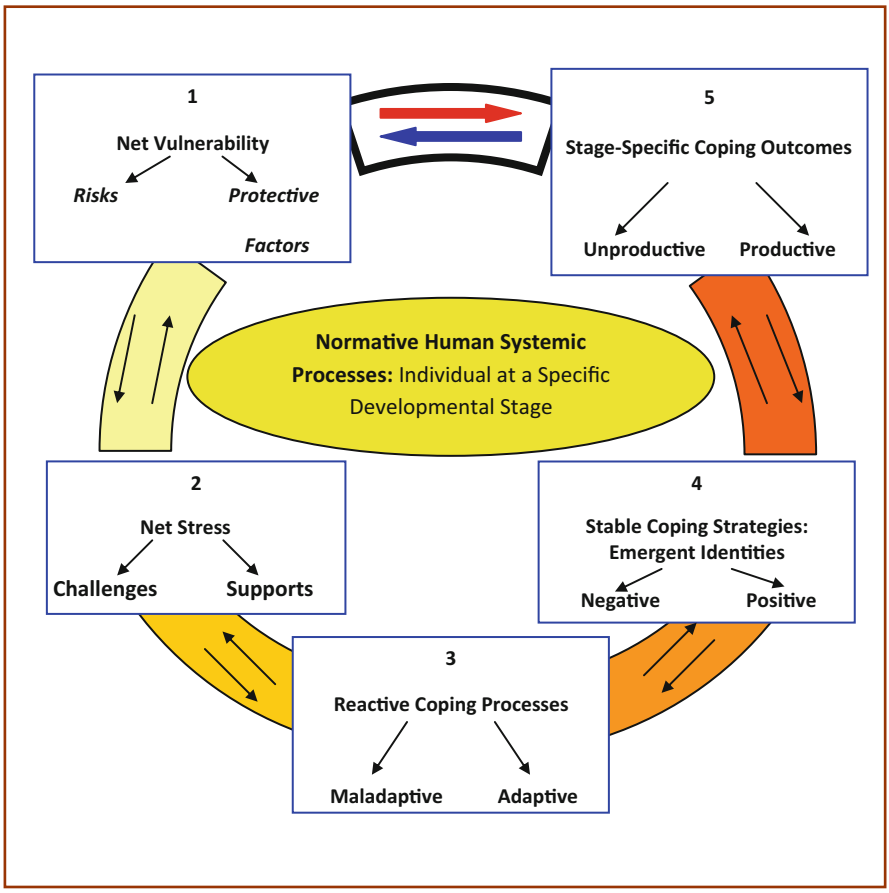

Fig. 9.1 Spencer's Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST)

In terms of the first component of the model, Net Vulnerability is the net effect of the interaction of risk and protective factors. For instance, skin colour as well as other physical features can be risk factors. In the US, a critical aspect of our individual experiences of race is visibility (i.e., what we look like, who we appear to be). Skin colour influences visibility as it is one critical characteristic used to determine race, along with facial features, hair texture and body type (e.g., Stepanova & Strube, 2009). In contrast, protective factors can include such variables as high academic achievement, positive self-concept or self-esteem, and peers and elders as sources of emotional support, counsel and comfort (Werner & Smith, 1982, 1992). It is important to note that some risk factors (e.g., contact with the juvenile justice system) and protective factors (e.g., high academic achievement) can be the result of Life Stage Outcomes in prior stages of development. Risk

factors increase the likelihood of negative outcomes, while protective factors increase the likelihood of positive outcomes.

However, as suggested by the second component of the PVEST model, Net Stress Engagement, youths' actual perceptions and experiences of stress and protection must be taken into account. From a phenomenological perspective, it is their perceptions of challenge and support that are most salient and psychologically meaningful. For instance, though there may be a stigma associated with darker skin colour, actual socialization experiences may influence how a child thinks about his or her own skin colour. Fegley, Spencer, Goss, Harpalani, and Charles (2007) report, in their study of adolescents of colour in the Northeastern US, that light skinned adolescents were just as likely to prefer their own skin colour as they were to prefer another skin colour. In contrast, medium complexioned adolescents were more likely than their light and dark skinned peers to prefer a skin colour other than their own. Dark skinned adolescents were more likely than their light and medium complexioned peers to prefer their own skin colour.

As it relates to skin colour, there is a reciprocal relationship between Net Vulnerability Level and Net Stress Engagement. This is reflected in interesting relationships among academic achievement, skin colour and skin colour preference. For example, Fegley and colleagues (2007) found a slightly greater likelihood for high-achieving adolescents to prefer their own skin colour and for the adolescents who were not doing as well, academically, to prefer a skin colour other than their own. One potential explanation is that high achieving youth may think about skin colour—as a signifier of race—in more complex ways than their lower achieving counterparts. Accordingly they may be less susceptible to stereotypical thinking about race and academic achievement. However, it is important to note that just because adolescents have the ability to think in more sophisticated and complex ways does not mean that they won't continue to think in stereotypical ways at times. Their levels of cognitive functioning can differ from one context, domain or task to the next (e.g., Scardamalia, 1977). Accordingly, it is possible that an adolescent can be high functioning in the academic domain, but think in more stereotypical ways when it comes to issues of race, ethnicity and class unless their socialization has made them explicitly aware of the complex relationships among race, culture, class and academic achievement. Conversely, a much simpler explanation is that skin colour preference, as a reflection of self-acceptance, could represent reduced levels of potential social distraction, leading to greater focus on academic achievement.

The actual perceptions of reward or challenge based on skin colour preference and the advantages and disadvantages resulting from high or low academic achievement will influence the types of coping responses engaged by youth as well as the character of the identities that emerge. Yet there is also a reciprocal relationship between Reactive Coping Processes and Net Stress Engagement whereby adaptive coping strategies can mitigate stress experienced and maladaptive coping strategies can exacerbate stress experienced. Spencer's PVEST theory (see Fig. 9.1) suggests that identity outcomes emerge from consistent coping behaviours (Spencer, 1995, 2006, 2008; Spencer, Dupree, & Hartmann, 1997; Spencer & Harpalani, 2004). Furthermore, resulting identities serve an organizing function as they influence

one's thoughts and behaviours (i.e., thoughts and behaviours either do or do not fit with aspects of my identity). Spencer (2006) also makes a distinction between Reactive Coping Processes and Stable Coping Strategies. Whereas reactive coping represents responses to specific types of challenges, stable coping represents general and redundant coping processes, internalized as aspects of a stable identity and, thus, subsequently adopted and engaged consistently (i.e., with a level of automaticity).

We offer that, in race-based societies like the US, black adolescents wanting their skin to be lighter or darker is psychologically important. A PVEST interpretation would suggest that skin colour preference represents (a) a stable coping response to pervasive and consistent exposure to culture-specific colour connotations and racial or ethnic stereotypes and (b) an identity outcome to the extent that it represents the degree of acceptance of one's own skin colour. When, for instance, an individual does not fit the skin colour ideal within a particular cultural context, skin colour preference represents his or her racial ideology (i.e., one's acceptance or rejection of a culture's overarching colour connotations). Given that in some instances, lighter skin is associated with more successful life outcomes, while darker skin is associated with less successful life outcomes (Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Hunter, 2002; Townsend, Thomas, Nellands, & Jackson, 2010), a preference for lighter skin can reflect a desire to be perceived as more similar to the other individuals who have light skin, and to benefit from all the advantages afforded to those with light skin (i.e., perceived and treated as more attractive, smarter, morally upright, etc.).

In the next section, we discuss black children and youth's developmental trajectories in their understanding of and responses to skin colour connotations, specifically, and stereotype consciousness, more generally, to illustrate nuanced social-cognitive cultural adaptations.

9.2 The Effects of the Experience of Race on the Social and Cognitive Development of Black Youth

Skin colour is a signifier of race. By virtue of being immersed in the social context of the US, children develop awareness of colour connotations (i.e., light is good, dark is bad). Clark and Clark (1940) found that black children as young as 3 years old had knowledge of skin colour differences and could appropriately self-identify based on their skin colour (see also Clark & Clark, 1939; Spencer, 1983). They also found that black children demonstrated a pro-white preference (Clark & Clark, 1947).

Subsequent studies have yielded similar findings that black children displayed a preference for lighter skin more frequently than they displayed a preference for darker skin (Gopaul-McNicol, 1988; Klein, Levine, & Charry, 1979; Porter, 1991; Williams & Roberson, 1967). But, in contrast to the self-hatred interpretation, other

research has shown that despite having a preference for the colour white (for dolls, pictures, or other objects), black children in early childhood display high self-esteem and positive self-concept (Banks, 1984; McAdoo, 1985; Spencer, 1984). Researchers maintain that black children's personal self-esteem is independent from their understanding of skin colour as a signifier of race and social status in early childhood (Bagley & Young, 1988; Banks, 1984; McAdoo, 1985; Spencer, 1984).

Spencer (1999) re-examined data on children's pro-white or Eurocentric response patterns, and found that black children demonstrate Eurocentric attitudes and preferences. However, older black children demonstrated a marked shift in their attitudes and preferences as they began to gain an understanding of their own and society's attitudes toward Blacks. As they get older and experience more advanced cognitive development, they are less able to ignore any dissonance created by their own understanding of their skin colour and society's attitudes toward and stereotypes about their skin colour.

Black children are also likely to develop stereotype consciousness (awareness that stereotypes exist and are generally held by others) earlier than children who do not experience stigma (McKown & Weinstein, 2003). By virtue of their stigmatized status, black children experience or observe discrimination or prejudice toward Blacks in ways that accelerate their awareness and understanding of racial stereotypes. Stereotypes are developed and function as schema (e.g., Seta, Seta, & McElroy, 2003). As schema, stereotypes are used to categorize and make meaning as it relates to people, behaviours, and even oneself. In the absence of higher level cognitive processes, schema for racial or ethnic groups can lead to stereotyped self-perceptions.

The social realities that provide the context for the racial discrimination, prejudice and segregation reinforce stereotypes and stereotypic thinking and increase the likelihood that black children and youth—without appropriate ethnic-racial socialization—will internalize these stereotypes. Despite the ubiquitous nature of racial segregation, discrimination and stereotypes, black youth can differ in their ability to give proper meaning to these experiences in ways that will help them avoid the negative psychological effects of these social conditions. For instance, Dupree, Spencer, and Fegley (2007) found racial differences in the ability of adolescents to recognize that Blacks and other minority groups struggle with oppression (i.e., are burdened with unjust imposition or restraint through the excessive use of authority or power—see Schmermund, Sellers, Mueller, & Crosby, 2001 for an explanation of the oppressed minority ideology subscale used to assess youth's recognition of oppression). Oppression often reflects "invisible" processes implicit within the policies and practices of organizations and institutions as well as the behaviours and language of individuals. Like Latino or white youth, black youth were less likely to recognize oppression compared to Asian and multiracial youth (Dupree et al., 2007). With a history of institutionalized slavery and a current disfavoured status as a group, one would expect that black youth would be most likely to recognize oppression. Yet, these findings suggest that, for many black youth, current manifestations of systemic racism and oppression are covert,

institutionalized and not easily recognized; even though they may still be negatively affected by such "hidden" processes (e.g., Link & Phelan, 2014). The consistent and patterned experiences of racial discrimination, segregation as well as educational and economic disparities may not create insight-producing dissonance. Thus, black youth are more likely to internalize the racism experienced in the absence of positive racial socialization that puts their racialized experiences into perspective (Hughes et al., 2006). They may attribute negative experiences to personal characteristics rather than to systemic processes that are not specific to whom they are as individuals. Although there may be some intersections, these racialized challenges are not necessarily the same as academic content-specific challenges or the burdens of having difficult peer relationships that youth may encounter as a function of normative development.

9.3 The Link Between Identity Processes and Resilience Processes

Some black children and youth will develop positive racial identities; some will not. The standards by which black children and youth evaluate themselves must be adapted in order to maintain positive self-concepts in contexts of racial stigma (e.g., devaluing educational settings which confer disfranchisement, rejecting unattainable Eurocentric beauty standards, constructing more authentic self-comparison criteria). Findings from analyses conducted using Spencer's (2005) Dual Axis Model of Vulnerability indicate that a preference for one's own skin colour despite negative connotations for darker skin colour can function as a protective factor contributing to relatively higher self-esteem compared to youth of colour who do not prefer their own skin colour. Other research indicates that low self-esteem predicts maladaptive outcomes such as higher levels of depression and generalized distress or getting sick in response to stressful experiences (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). Thus, its relationship to vulnerability is important to understand.

Spencer's (2005) Dual-Axis Model of Vulnerability conceptualizes vulnerability as a function of the interaction of risk and protective factors. In these analyses, a total risk score was calculated based on extreme poverty status, living in a single-parent household and discrimination based on skin colour. Likewise, a total protective factors score was calculated based on positive, supportive school climate, high parental monitoring and preference for one's own skin colour. In the Dual-Axis Model of Vulnerability, individuals can be low vulnerability (high risk-high protective factors), high vulnerability (high risk-low protective factors), undetermined vulnerability (low risk-high protective factors) or masked vulnerability (low risk-low protective factors). When considering self-esteem, comparisons of vulnerability status indicated that low vulnerability youth were significantly

higher in self-esteem than the other vulnerability groups. Undetermined vulnerability youth were higher in self-esteem than high and masked vulnerability youth.

These findings suggest that a particular identity status may function as a stable source of internalized strength and inferred support, representing a source of resilience for the individual. Skin colour preference represents one critical aspect of identity for black adolescents in the US. Research targeting high achieving African American students provides many examples of youth who are both high achieving and maintain positive racial identities (Bonner, Lewis, Bowman-Perrott, Hill-Jackson, & James, 2005; Carter, 2007; Carter-Andrews, 2009; Graham & Anderson, 2008; Harper, 2006; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001). Some of these same studies demonstrate that these high achieving youth not only hold race central to their identities but (a) they also have a critical understanding of the structural or systemic forces that work against the positive development and achievement of racial and ethnic minorities, and (b) they seek to actively resist these forces (Bonner et al., 2005; Carter, 2007; Carter-Andrews, 2009; Graham & Anderson, 2008). They are not resisting or opposing a culture of achievement. They are resisting stereotypical conceptions of their racial or ethnic group. Specifically, they resist assumptions that they are underachievers and assumptions about the superiority of members of the majority culture. Yet these data do not preclude the possibility that there are high achieving youth who do have negative racial identities.

Criticism from parents about weight, physical activity and academic achievement are strongly correlated with physical and emotional distress (Spencer, Fegley, & Dupree, 2006). But, by providing positive feedback in their verbal and nonverbal behaviour, parents and other socializing agents can serve as buffers against the negative feedback that black youth potentially receive from interactions within and observations of the broader social context (Hughes et al., 2006). Essentially then, parents of black youth must explicitly and implicitly provide preparation for bias and instil cultural pride in anticipation of the challenges their children will face because of their stigmatized status (Hughes et al., 2006). Such socialization promotes resilience through positive racial identity and is associated with active coping in response to racism and less internalization of racism (Hughes et al., 2006).

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Chapter 10
White Out: The Invisibility of White North American Culture and Resilience Processes

Patrick Russell, Linda Liebenberg, and Michael Ungar

A youth's culture, and youth identification with their culture, has been shown to play an important part in the resilience process (Ungar, 2008; Ungar et al., 2007). Attachment to and identification with one's culture enables youth to build a supportive network of individuals they can rely on to help them navigate their way through adversity (Walsh, 2006) and to cope with environmental and individual stressors (Evans et al., 2012; Settles, Navarrete, Pagano, Abdou, & Sidanius, 2010). Yet, most studies that explore how young people's identification with their culture affects the resilience processes around them focus on visible minority youth. This leaves questions regarding how culture and cultural identity impact the resilience processes of "white" youth in contexts where they are the visible majority (e.g., Atlantic Canada).

The intent of this chapter is to examine the disconnect between white youth and their culture, and how this disconnect affects their resilience processes. We will first review the importance of cultural resources to resilience processes by focusing on racial and related ethnic identities. While our focus is specifically on racial factors associated with resilience, we realize that race, culture and ethnicity are inextricably linked (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1989). A white, or Caucasian, skin colour is often associated with a particular set of cultural practices that assume homogeneity across ethnic groups which are, at least superficially, assumed to be of the same phenotype. This will be followed by a review of the literature that describes issues of invisibility connected to whiteness, youth, and culture. Here we deconstruct assumptions regarding normative processes associated with resilience and show that these, in part, reflect ideological constructs that bias towards white superiority. Findings from the Pathways to Resilience study will then be presented. These findings highlight the disconnect of youth who self-identify as white, from their

P. Russell • L. Liebenberg (✉) • M. Ungar
Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS B3H 4R2, Canada
e-mail: Linda.Liebenberg@Dal.Ca

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culture, and the ways in which this impacts the resilience processes of these youth. The chapter concludes with a discussion of directions for future research.

10.1 What We Know About Resilience Processes and the Role of Cultural Identification

It is well established that identity development is an integral part of adolescence (Costigan, Su, & Hua, 2009; Erikson, 1968). Forming and developing one's identity during adolescence not only sees youth define how they as individuals are unique from everyone else, but also defines how they are connected to the social groups that surround them (Borrero & Yeh, 2011; Marcia, 1980). Specifically, youth engage in "internal and external processes through which identity markers, group symbols, social roles, and social meanings take firm hold as central components to both one's self-conception, presentation of self, and perceptions held by others" (Best, 2011, p. 908). The overriding concern for youth during adolescence is to engage in these internal and external processes in order to bring a clear resolution to the expansive and complicated social process of identity formation (Erikson, 1968). Identity formation is particularly important for youth confronted by adversity because it can mitigate the influence of risk factors (Bronk, 2011).

In previous work, we have demonstrated that identification with the culture of one's ancestors is an integral component of the resilience processes (Ungar et al., 2007). Specifically this work has shown that a youth's identification with culture can provide youth with a "personal and collective sense of purpose" and a "self-appraisal of strengths, weakness, aspirations, beliefs, and values, including spiritual and religious identification" (Ungar et al., 2007, p. 295). In this chapter, however, we purposively do not limit ourselves to any specific list of factors that are assumed to impact the identities of white youth. Instead, we believe that there is a seemingly endless list of factors in different social ecologies that can shape a youth's behaviour, beliefs, and other manifestations of culture (Nasir, McLaughlin, & Jones, 2009). When stereotypes are deconstructed, it is easier to see that a young person's identity is multifaceted even though we often ignore racial and cultural factors when we study white youth.

As McCall (2005) points out, to have a theory that limits the number of facets impacting identity, or the multiple identities that an individual has, neglects the different perspectives of other identities – identities that are often marginalized. This is seen clearly in approaches to anti-oppressive research focused on the intersection of identities that are anchored to gender, sexual orientation, race, ability and class (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). For example, Dicker and Piepmeier (2003) point out that research typically neglects the perspectives of people who identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgendered, and call for an expansion of the components researchers consider in their exploration of identity. Limiting a theory of identity formation overlooks the complexity of identity

and may marginalize behaviours that are meaningful to an individual and which play an important part in defining his or her social attachments.

With racial and ethnic grouping also comes patterns of behaviour that may be seen as adaptive by those who are cultural insiders but misperceived by outsiders as problematic. For this reason, a growing number of resilience researchers have investigated the role that racial and ethnic identity formation can play in facilitating resilience in youth. It is therefore important for resilience researchers to include how youth themselves define the identities that are important to them in their context. As argued elsewhere, a localised understanding of resilience retains a focus on the context and culture of youth, and the ways in which these ecological factors change or challenge their likelihood of success (Theron et al., 2011). The strategic use of research methods which foreground youth voice in understanding identity and resilience processes helps reduce the biases of the researcher (Masten, 2011). As Ungar (2006, 2008) shows, personal biases have often resulted in researchers policing youth into rigid categories that imply right and wrong pathways of development and adaptation, categories that are reflective of the beliefs of the researcher rather than of the realities of youth themselves. Behaviours regarded as delinquent, are behaviours some youth may use to cope when prosocial pathways to successful development are blocked.

This appreciation for hidden pathways to resilience (Ungar, 2006) is clearly demonstrated in work by others. Venkatesh and Levitt (2000) for example, studied youth involved in the Black Kings, a street gang that sells narcotics in Chicago's South Side. Their findings showed that youth's involvement in the Black Kings is in part motivated by the need to ensure provision of basic necessities like food and clothing. Employment opportunities available to youth in the community were more often than not low paying menial jobs which would keep them in poverty. In response, some youth joined the Black Kings in order to provide for themselves and their families, to earn a livable wage, and to escape poverty. Venkatesh and Levitt argue that despite youth being labelled as delinquent, they are in fact adapting well in the face of systemic barriers that severely limit their advancement in meaningful education and employment. These youth are in a process of entreupreurship, albeit selling illegal drugs, and in the process succeed financially despite their lack of formal training.

The inclusion of insider and youth perspectives is important given the role of positive ethnic identity in facilitating the resilience processes of marginalized youth. In their meta-analysis of 184 studies that examined the relationships between ethnic identity, psychological wellbeing and self-esteem, Smith and Silva (2011) for example found that adopting a positive ethnic identity is associated with high levels of psychological wellbeing and self-esteem. Likewise, findings from Roberts et al.'s (1999) study of ethnic identity in European American, African American, and Mexican American middle school students and resilience have shown that across these racial groups youth who adopted a positive ethnic identity exhibited higher levels of psychological wellbeing, coping, self-esteem, and optimism, as well as lower instances of loneliness and depression than youth who did not exhibit a strong ethnic identity. These findings are reflected in studies of adolescent African

American youth which show that positive racial identification is positively correlated with improved academic achievement (Byrd & Chavous, 2009), as well as greater psychological wellbeing and functioning (Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). Furthermore, positive racial and ethnic identification is inversely correlated with depression and anxiety among racial minorities (Mandara, Gaylord-Harden, Richards, & Ragsdale, 2009).

Many researchers argue that youth who possess strong racial and ethnic identities demonstrate higher levels of resilience because they are connected to a larger group of people. This connection allows youth to receive social support from other group members who can help them navigate their way during times of adversity (Costigan et al., 2009; Smith & Silva, 2011; Theron et al., 2011; Ungar et al., 2007). This has led researchers to advocate that services be provided in culturally and contextually meaningful ways in order to more effectively facilitate resilience among youth (Ungar, Liebenberg, Armstrong, Dudding, & Van de Vijver, 2013).

While there is strong support for the importance that racial and ethnic identities can play in facilitating resilience in youth, the overwhelming majority of research has been conducted with youth from visible minority groups. While this is partly because these youth and their communities have experienced widespread marginalization and oppression, the absence of visible majority youth from resilience research further reinforces racial hierarchies and racist ideologies about white superiority (Feagin, 2010; Simmons, 2010). Additionally, it also leaves marginalized and disadvantaged white youth from accessing culturally and contextually relevant resources and services that might be appropriate to their particular social location.

10.1.1 Whiteness and Racial Identities

Whiteness and racial identity have long been thought to be a misnomer. In traditional discourses on racial identity, being white was, and still is, not considered a race (Frankenberg, 1993). Racial identities have been typically attributed to non-white, visible minority individuals, meaning that race was only something possessed by people who did not have European ancestry (Andersen, 2003). The exclusion of whiteness as a race has had several consequences. First the term ‘race’ has often been used in racist discourses as a synonym for inferiority, criminality, moral ambiguity, and so on. This has, in turn, resulted in the justification of racist actions, attitudes, and ideologies (Burman, Smailes, & Chantler, 2004; Dua & Roberston, 1999). Covington (2010) demonstrates that while African American youth are often depicted in the media as perpetrators of crime and delinquency, solely responsible for their acts, white youth who engage in violent acts are constructed as being victims of regulations and policies. For example, gun violence by white youth is often blamed on the lack of regulation around gun control, and therefore, the blame is focused on policy rather than youth themselves, while for

African American youth, blame is ordinarily focused on youth, their families, and their culture.

Second, little attention has been paid to the formation and role of white racial identities (Lewis, 2004). Researchers typically overlook that whiteness has different meanings attached to it, that privilege is not uniform across every white person, and neglect the different way that white people are racialized (Dijk, 1993). Allison (2002) for example, describes her experiences of growing up as "white trash", from a lower socio-economic class, where she was abused by her step-father, lived off welfare, and was constantly moving because of her parents' inability to find long term employment. Lawler (2005) goes on to describe that white working class people are often constructed in the media as "disgusting subjects" (p. 431) who are physically, socially, and morally offensive. Lawler explains that this process results in white working class individuals being considered not "white enough," and, from a sociological perspective, having their racial identities of whiteness revoked, and their supposed biological deficiencies attributed to an imagined non-white racial heritage. As such, whiteness becomes a selective identity that is socially constructed. Overlooking the various ways in which white racial identities can be formed not only feeds into racist discourses but also neglects the different experiences that are associated with being part of the visible majority.

Most investigations into whiteness and youth predominately examine racist attitudes and beliefs amongst white youth (Bucholtz, 2011; Perry & Shotwell, 2009). While it is extremely important to understand how youth adopt, normalize, and promote racist stereotypes and discourses in order to prevent them, focusing solely on racist attitudes overlooks how white youth identify racially and how this can facilitate or hinder their resilience processes.

From the limited research available on the racial identification of white youth, three things are apparent. First, visible majority youth generally seem to be unaware that they have a racial identity (Grossman & Charmaraman, 2009). Second, even if they identify themselves as white, visible majority youth tend to avoid talking about their racial identity as they understand this to be an indicator of racism (Perry, 2001). Third, visible majority youth do appear to be seeking connection with a racial identity (Grossman & Charmaraman, 2009). This is seen in their appropriation of cultural markers that originate from other cultural and racial heritages than their own. In her research of whiteness and race in a high school in California, Bucholtz (2010) found that white students adopt hip hop culture into their own, and thereby refrain from identifying as white, identifying instead with norms associated with the African American community. These studies, despite the insight they provide, fail to provide much understanding of how white youth identify with their race and how this affects their resilience processes. Initial findings from the Pathways to Resilience project point to some important opportunities for future research.

10.2 The Pathways to Resilience Project

The Pathways to Resilience Project is a five country (Canada, China, Colombia, New Zealand, and South Africa) exploration of how youth living in contexts of adversity navigate through formal and informal services, and which of these pathways is most facilitative of resilience processes and improved functional outcomes (www.resilienceresearch.org). This mixed-method project focuses on: individual, social, and ecological risks that young people face; culturally specific aspects of resilience that youth use in their community to cope with problems; and young people's patterns of lifetime service use. The goals of the research are to identify how formal and informal services can best support youth living in or with adversity across different cultures and contexts; what informal family and community supports are available to youth; and to identify the pathways and support networks best able to help youth experiencing adversity achieve functional outcomes.

Youth participating in this study are from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, between the ages of 13 and 19, facing significant risks, and accessing services to mediate those risks. As part of the quantitative component of the study, youth completed the Pathways to Resilience Youth Measure (PRYM) which explored the aforementioned components through inclusion of validated scales and sub-scales (Ungar et al., 2013). Included in the PRYM is the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-28), a social ecological measure of resilience, that includes individual, relational, and cultural/community components (Liebenberg, Ungar, & Van de Vijver, 2012), reflecting Ungar's (2008) definition of resilience. Reviewing data from only the Canadian site, two interesting patterns emerge with regard to race and resilience.

10.2.1 Canadian Patterns

Of the 497 multiple service using youth who completed the PRYM, 273 (54.9 %) self-identified as being visible majority (white), and 220 (44.3 %) self-identified as being visible minority youth (for example African Canadian or Aboriginal). Data from the 4 (.8 %) who did not answer the question were excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 493 youth, 214 (43.4 %) were girls, and the average age of participants was 17 years ($M = 16.89$; $SD = 1.864$). Within these two groups, the average age of those youth who identified as visible minority youth is 17 years ($M = 16.6$; $SD = 1.788$) and 103 (46.8 %) of these youth are girls. Similarly, the average age of youth who identified as visible majority is also 17 ($M = 17.06$; $SD = 1.902$) and 111 (40.7 %) of these youth are girls.

To understand the interaction of racial identity and resilience processes, we first explored with descriptive statistics how youth responded to questions of ethnic identification, grouped by racial identification. Second, we reviewed differences in

scores on the contextual sub-scale of the CYRM-28 together with related sub-clusters of questions for both groups using independent samples t-tests.

Almost all youth who self-reported as being of a visible majority race (i.e. white), identified with some sort of Anglo-European heritage (n = 229; 83.9 %), demonstrating congruence with their racial identification. A further five youth (1.9 %) who had identified as visible majority racially, identified with an Aboriginal group in terms of ethnic identity; 9 (3.3 %) with a mixed heritage ethnicity; one (.4 %) youth identified as Japanese; and, 29 (10.6 %) visible majority youth did not identify with any ethnic heritage at all. By contrast fewer youth who self-identified as being of a visible minority race (such as African Canadian or Aboriginal), identified with a cultural group that showed congruence with their racial identification (n = 127; 57.9 %). If we include youth who identified as mixed race, and identified with multiple ethnicities (n = 48; 21.8 %), the number rises to 175 (79.7 %). A further 15 (6.9 %) visible minority youth identified as Canadian, while 21 youth (9.5 %) identified with Anglo-European ethnicities. Interestingly, only nine (4.17 %) visible minority youth failed to identify with an ethnic identity, less than half of the percentage of visible majority youth who failed to identify with an ethnic identity. These findings suggests that while most visible majority youth do have a culturally congruent ethnic identity, visible minority youth are more likely than visible majority youth to have an ethnic identity, irrespective of this identity being culturally congruent or not.

Findings from the independent samples t-tests of sub-scale scores on the CYRM show a statistically significant difference in scores on the cultural and contextual sub-scale, with visible minority youth scoring higher (M = 36.64, SD = 7.06) than visible majority youth [M = 33.25; SD = 7.65; t(491) = −5.055, p = .000]. Furthermore, these differences have a moderate effect size (.05); belonging to culture and context explains 5 % of the variance in the differences between these two groups. Exploring this in further detail, we see statistically significant differences between these two groups of youth on all three sub-clusters of questions pertaining to the cultural and contextual sub-scale (see Table 10.1). Visible minority youth score higher than visible majority youth on all three sub-scales, with the smallest differences occurring on the educational sub-cluster of questions, and the largest differences seen on spiritual questions. While the effect size on the spiritual sub-cluster of questions is moderate, the effect size for education and culture is small.

The cultural and contextual sub-scale of the CYRM reflects a young person's sense of belonging to community and culture. The three related sub-clusters of questions reflect connection to educational context ("Getting an education is important to me" and "I feel I belong at my school"), connection to community and culture ("I have people I look up to"; "I am proud of my ethnic background" and, "I enjoy my community's traditions"), and having a spiritual framework (including "Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me" and "I think it is important to serve my community"). This sense of belonging is important because it will influence a young person's willingness to engage with and draw on resources and supports in their social context related to increased resilience processes.

Table 10.1 Score differences in sub-scales and sub-clusters of questions for youth

Sub-scale	Visible majority youth (n = 273)	Visible minority youth (n = 220)	*t*	*df*	Eta squared
Individual	43.04	43.09	−.085	491	.00
	(6.52)	(6.33)			
Relational	26.33	27.06	−1.32	491	.00
	(6.20)	(5.97)			
Contextual	33.25	36.64	5.06**	491	.05
	(7.65)	(7.07)			
Contextual sub-cluster of questions					
Spiritual	2.39	2.82	−4.78**	491	.05
	(0.99)	(1.00)			
Education	3.67	3.97	−3.08*	491	.02
	(1.13)	(1.00)			
Culture	3.75	4.05	−4.05**	491	.03
	(0.86)	(0.76)			

Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means
*p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .001

These responses reflect both what we expected to see, as well as interesting anomalies. While most white youth are able to identify an ethnic heritage often associated with place of origin of an ancestor (e.g. Scottish, Irish), such identification does not appear to be informing their connection to culture and context as a component of their resilience. What we see rather, is that marginalized youth who self-identify as visible minority youth, draw more heavily on cultural identity and contextual resources related to resilience. While these effect sizes related to these differences may be moderate, it is important to remember that resilience processes are interrelated, presenting an additive model of counterbalance to risk. The implication is that the more we are able to bolster *all* facets of resilience processes the better for youth in adversity. For visible majority youth, their connection to culture and spirituality are self-reported as particularly low. These findings are perhaps reflective of the disconnect youth feel from actual cultural components, where culture becomes, in a sense, invisible (Grossman & Charmaraman, 2009). Youth and other members of their social ecologies may therefore not have a clear understanding of what white culture is (Bucholtz, 2010; Grossman & Charmaraman, 2009). What we have learned from our own work (Ungar et al., 2007) and that of authors such as Walsh (2006) and Masten (2011) is just how important this connection is when navigating through high-risk situations. Collectively then important questions are raised regarding the adherence to cultural practices, values and beliefs among white youth (Ungar et al., 2007). Would white youth be more resilient if their racial identification translated into access to spiritual, cultural or educational resources? Findings from the Pathways to

Resilience study highlight an important facet of resilience that is lacking for white youth that requires our attention.

Conclusion

Findings from this review of the literature and brief analysis of some of the Pathways to Resilience data identify issues relevant to a more racially sensitive understanding of resilience. Our findings suggest that very little is known about how race, racial identification, and resilience are connected for visible majority youth in North America. This research supports our previous social ecological research that has shown the integral role culture can play in facilitating resilience for all youth experiencing adversity (see Ungar, 2008; Ungar et al., 2007). However, this chapter draws attention to visible majority youth. Previous studies on culture and youth resilience show positive correlations between visible minority youth and indicators of resilience (Mandara et al., 2009; Roberts et al., 1999; Sellers et al., 2006; Smith & Silva, 2011). These studies have shown that adolescents who exhibit high levels of attachment to their racial identity show higher levels of psychological wellbeing and functioning, as well as utilizing healthier coping strategies than those youth who exhibited low levels of racial identification. Review of our own data shows that visible majority youth exhibit low levels of attachment to their racial group suggesting lower levels of cultural factors associated with resilience in their lives. This review of the literature and our data highlights important gaps in our understanding of the interactions of visual majority youth and their cultural identification as a process of resilience.

This review also highlights the need for researchers to identify and examine the different ways in which visible majority youth compensate for an apparent weak connection to their race-based culture. Researchers such as Bucholtz (2010) provide some insight into this process by documenting how visible majority youth adopt and identify with different cultures that are not considered to be reflective of their racial heritage, namely hip hop culture. If white youth fail to identify with aspects of "white" culture, is their initiative to search for and adopt aspects of other cultures an attempt at compensating for the invisibility of their own culture and the resources it could bring? Is this a form of resilience that has been previously hidden to us because of own preconceptions of about race and culture (Bottrell, 2007; Ungar, 2006)? Currently, there is no available research that answers these questions. This chapter provides a starting point for future research regarding youth resilience and race among white youth.

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Chapter 11
Deaf Culture and Youth Resilience in Diverse American Communities

Elizabeth A. Moore and Donna M. Mertens

Research in the United States and elsewhere in the world supports the proposition that Deaf people experience significant adversity throughout their lives, starting with the diagnosis of hearing loss and challenges in obtaining supportive services at an early age and onward (Meadow-Orlans, Mertens, & Sass-Lehrer, 2003). For example, hearing parents with Deaf children complain that professionals treat them in a patronizing manner at the time of diagnosis and when providing advice about their child. Deaf parents complain that many hearing professionals do not have sufficient signing skills for effective communication with them and do not understand Deaf culture. Nonetheless, several studies in the United States demonstrate the resilience processes of Deaf people via individual effort and support from their communities and advocates (Moore, 2011; Szarkowski & Brice, 2005; Williamson, 2007). This social-ecologically supported pattern of achieving positive outcomes aligns with Ungar's (2008) definition of resilience that includes individual capacity to overcome adversity and community capacity to provide support in culturally meaningful ways.

In this chapter, we use research conducted within the transformative paradigm to expand understandings about resilience, as urged by Liebenberg and Ungar (2009). We pay particular attention to Deaf culture (i.e., the ways of being and doing of the Deaf community) and how Deaf culture is supportive of resilience processes in Deaf youth. Based on the transformative values of prioritizing human rights, critically interrogating versions of reality, and operating from a trusting and appreciative relationship between the researcher and the community, the crucial principle is that the studies included in this chapter used culturally responsive methodologies designed to facilitate social change (Mertens, 2009; Mertens & Wilson, 2012).

E.A. Moore (✉)
Department of Social Work, Gallaudet University, Washington, DC, USA
e-mail: Elizabeth.Moore@gallaudet.edu

D.M. Mertens
Independent Consultant, Washington, DC, USA

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Furthermore, the transformative paradigm used to frame the research studies included in this chapter rejects a deficit view of the Deaf community (Harris, Holmes, & Mertens, 2009; Mertens, 2015). It calls upon researchers to be respectful of cultural diversity and to make visible different versions of reality that are present with regard to marginalized communities. For example, in the United States many Deaf people do not see themselves as disabled; rather they see themselves as a culturally distinct, linguistic minority community, using American Sign Language (ASL) (Padden & Humphries, 2005) to communicate.

As a minority community, many Deaf people experience marginalization. This sense of marginalization is compounded for people of marginalized race or ethnicity. Deaf culture, similar to other cultures, was born out of shared experiences and a shared language (see also Chap. 2 of this volume). Race, another culturally weighted concept, plays a significant role in the transition of culturally diverse Deaf youth through schools and colleges (see also Chap. 9 of this volume). Thus, the research discussed in this chapter reflects the intersection of race and hearing status through the lens of transformative research and resilience theory.

11.1 Resilience Research with the Deaf Community

Ungar et al. (2007) identified seven tensions that, once resolved, facilitate resilience processes (see Chap. 3 of this volume). Importantly, as discussed in the sections below, these tensions need to be resolved in ways that make sense to young people themselves, given their culture and context. Diversity in the Deaf community means that the seven tensions are experienced differently by different people in this community. Studies that used the transformative paradigm to guide their investigations illustrate how different American Deaf people experience and resolve the seven tensions (see Table 11.1). While this set of tensions is useful for explaining how the culture of the Deaf youth cohorts influence generic resilience processes, overarching issues for Deaf youth are the cultural perceptions of and responses to loss of hearing and access to visual language. Thus, we argue that exploration of these overarching issues emanating from research with the Deaf community expands understandings of the concept of resilience as it has been conceptualized from research in hearing communities.

11.1.1 Access to Material Resources

While approximately 16 % of Deaf youth in the USA are black (Gallaudet Research Institute, 2012), no national data are available that compare the socioeconomic status of black and white families with Deaf children. However, one can infer that access to material resources is less for Black Deaf families given the economic disparities between Whites and Blacks in the general population. Hence,

Table 11.1 Transformative studies of deaf culture and resilience

Studies	Authors	Participants
Parents and their deaf children: The early years.	Meadow-Orlans et al. (2003)	404 Parents of 6–7 year old deaf children
Black Deaf administrators: Leadership issues and perceived challenges to organizational advancement.	Moore (2011)	Six Black Deaf administrators
Factors that influence the leadership development of American Indian deaf women	Paris (2012)	Five American Indian Deaf women
Positive aspects of parenting a deaf child: Categories of potential positive influence	Szarkowski and Brice (2005)	Seven mothers and three fathers of young deaf children
Black Deaf students: A model for educational success.	Williamson (2007)	Nine African American men and women

this section examines the intersection of race and hearing status in terms of the material resources that support Deaf youth of color to facilitate their development and learning processes (Williamson, 2007). While access to material resources can refer to having sufficient food and clothing, the material focus for the Deaf community is on support for the development of communication, language, cognition, and social skills.

The majority of Deaf children are born to hearing parents who often do not know where to turn for resources that are specific to the needs of a Deaf child (Meadow-Orlans et al., 2003). These resources include appropriate diagnosis, choices of language, supportive strategies, educational placement, assistive listening devices, and speech therapy. Additionally, parents may receive conflicting advice from different professionals and family members, amplifying lack of access to appropriate support required for their Deaf child to thrive. Deaf parents of Deaf children may have more access to personal strengths to support their child, but they also encounter challenges when trying to access material resources through professionals who are not competent communicators in ASL. Williamson's (2007) study of resilience in Black Deaf youth who were transitioning from high school to college revealed the need for schools that serve Deaf students to develop and maintain a partnership with communities and professional organizations in order to ensure that Deaf youth and their families have full access to resources. A hearing mother gave this testimony at the National Early Hearing Detection Intervention (EHDI) conference that illustrates the historical lack of access to material resources:

> Twenty years ago, when she was 11 months old, my daughter was identified as Deaf at a national children's hospital. Although I was horrified to know that she had missed nearly a year of language input, I was told how "lucky" it was that she was identified so "early." I left the hospital with no information about what to do next, whom to contact, or what early intervention services were available. Five years later my son was identified at the same hospital. Since his sister was Deaf, I thought it would be a pretty good idea to get his hearing levels checked. He really was identified early—he was only a few weeks old.

> Again, I left the hospital with no information about what to do next, whom to contact, or what early intervention services were available. I am grateful that things have changed (Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, 2011, p. 3).

To address some of these shortcomings, the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) was established in 2010 to serve as a resource for implementing and improving the EHDI program to ensure that parents and their Deaf or hard of hearing child receive proper services, advice, and guidance (NCHAM, 2013). NCHAM is a network of federal agencies, medical organizations, and Deaf and hard of hearing organizations. Together with the EHDI, the Gallaudet University Early Intervention and Outreach Program teaches parents how to communicate with their Deaf child through the use of American Sign Language (ASL), promote early literacy, and identify and respond to the needs of youth at each stage of their development. Simultaneously, the Deaf child is taught to use visual and cognitive skills and how to communicate their needs in ASL (Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, 2011). Interdisciplinary teams that include Deaf adults and parents serve as resources, working closely with families to ensure that parents receive support and guidance, realize they are not alone, and hear different experiences from other parents. These *culturally relevant* resources (available through the Laurent Clerc Center) are uniquely suited to supporting resilience processes. Although this is a national outreach resource, many people remain unserved due to logistical constraints.

To adjust well, Deaf youth also rely heavily on technologies that facilitate their lifestyles. In the past, telecommunication devices for the Deaf (TTY) enabled communication via telephones with text screens. For example, in Williamson's (2007) study, a participant remembered the technological support she received: "My mother tried to make sure I had what I needed to get the best education possible. I had a TTY, a captioned television, and anything else that was recommended for a Deaf child" (p. 59). Advances in technology are revolutionizing Deaf communities' access to social contacts and information through wider use of captioning and computers and smart phones that send video texts, enable video chats, and support video blogs.

11.1.2 Student-Teacher/-Mentor Relationships

Williamson (2007) utilized the theory of resilience (Ungar et al., 2007) within the transformative paradigm to examine protective factors that contribute to the achievement of Black Deaf high school and postsecondary program graduates. She revealed that student/teacher/administrator relationships facilitate access to material resources. Williamson's findings are important given that Deaf students across the United States can attend schools that are primarily oral (53 %) or those that use sign alone or sign combined with speech (42 %) (Gallaudet Research Institute, 2012). Consideration of sign-based education is important as it provides

for direct visual communication and is considered to be more accessible for many Deaf people. Where signing cannot or does not occur in school settings, the teacher/student relation takes on additional importance. As the following participant explains, it was a teacher that initiated an important change in schools:

> One of my favorite teachers said that I should go to a high school where I would have more exposure to Deaf students and because the education for me in the South was not good. The teachers could explain information to me. My teacher never mentioned anything about the school for the Deaf within my state. She did not want me to go there. She wanted me to go to the school out of state for a better education. (Williamson, 2007, p. 95)

In sign-based schools, teachers interact meaningfully with students in a safe educational environment through the use of ASL. Teachers share the knowledge of Deaf community-related issues and students absorb, refine, and analyze the information without feeling threatened. As a participant in Moore's (2011) study remarked on being a mentor:

> I have several mentees but I am not their professional mentor. Most of my mentees are Black Deaf young girls. They are looking up to me. They view me as another mother figure. I have one mentee that I have been looking after for twelve years. I give them feedback. For example, yesterday at the cookout, one girl informed me that she had a problem with another girl and asked for some feedback. We had a talk. Later, that girl came back and informed me that the problem she had with another girl had been resolved. I felt good about that. (p. 184).

Simultaneously, teachers monitor and guide student achievement. Thus the relationship between teachers and students impacts on student development (Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, 2011). Williamson (2007, p. 93) summarized student perceptions of teacher-student relationships:

> [Black] Deaf participants described the characteristics of their teachers that they felt positively influenced their development. These were high expectations, open and ongoing communication, challenging educational experiences, inclusion of relevant experiences in coursework, and inclusion of [black] mentors and role models. For those participants who attended schools for the Deaf, they found it very helpful that those teachers were fluent in sign language and understood Deaf Culture.

Having access to a mentor, especially a signing Deaf adult, is a huge support for resilience in Deaf youth, however, there is a serious shortage of Deaf people of color at the administrative and teacher levels. Research shows that 2.5 % of educators in 313 mainstreamed programs and residential schools for the Deaf are Deaf teachers of color, and only 0.6 % of administrators are Deaf administrators of color (Simms, Rusher, Andrews, & Coryell, 2008). Thus, the opportunities for mentorships for Deaf youth of color are limited. Being exposed to Black Deaf mentors increases the academic success of Black Deaf high school and postsecondary students (Williamson, 2007). In addition, increasing numbers of Deaf schools are closing and more Deaf children are being mainstreamed (Ramsey, 1997). The implications of these trends mean less access to mentorship and direct communication via sign language.

Empirical research on the experiences and perceptions of Black Deaf administrators (Moore, 2011) confirms that teachers and other mentors play important roles

in the lives of Deaf individuals, providing emotional support, guiding education, and promoting personal growth. Parents are also potentially significant mentors (Moore, 2011; Szarkowski & Brice, 2005; Williamson, 2007). One participant in Moore's study explained that she had several mentors, including teachers at the school for the Deaf and her father. She described her father's high expectations for her and how he reacted when she got a C in a chemistry course:

> When my father read my grade report, he made unpleasant facial expressions. I explained what happened in writing. Our communication was limited to gestures and writing. Anyway, I attempted to convince my father that my Chemistry teacher was lousy. My father's response was that "... you always have good teachers and bad teachers... It does not matter how good or how bad they are. How can it make a difference? It is you. You know, we are poor but we are stubborn to find ways to overcome poverty. It is you." What my father said to me really hit me so hard. I ended up excelling in school. I was chosen as a valedictorian for the high school graduation (p. 108).

11.1.3 The Deaf Community's Culture of Cohesiveness and Pride

Williamson (2007) notes that the use of ASL not only facilitates development of supportive relationships, but it also promotes social cohesion in the Deaf community. Through accessible communication, Deaf youth discuss what being Deaf means to them, analyze their strengths and weaknesses, read the stories of successful Deaf persons, and, consequently, realize commonalities. In contrast, Deaf youth in hearing or mainstream schools often lack opportunities to talk about their experiences. One Black Deaf participant in Moore's (2011) study, described how she became part of the Deaf community through the encouragement of a female White Deaf Gallaudet University alumnus:

> She was the person who encouraged me to go to Gallaudet University. She encouraged me to explore my Deaf side because I acted like a hearing person, 'thinking hearing.' I did not think highly of the Deaf community because of what I was already exposed to. I met several Deaf people who were not educated and had menial jobs such as cleaning and cooking. Many of them did not have leadership roles... Gallaudet University showed me another side of Deaf leadership. It also showed me another side of Deaf pride. Gallaudet University has many Deaf people who are not submissive to hearing people. There are so many bright Deaf people I met. It really changed my whole perspective of Deaf community. Even though Gallaudet University is predominantly White, my experience was positive. Such experiences gave me a sense of self-pride (p. 116–117).

The Deaf community preserves its cohesion and culture by celebrating Deaf Awareness week, sponsoring ASL events, and hosting festivals in recognition of Deaf people's accomplishments. Some Deaf youth of color have the advantage of meeting Deaf professionals of color earlier in their lives at school or cultural events who help them realize their potential and to be proud of whom and how they are. Deaf professionals share their life stories and how they overcame obstacles and the youth learn lessons from this experience.

11.1.4 Identity: A Multifacetted Process

Identity in the American Deaf community, as in many cultural intersections, is influenced by the race/ethnicity of the person. For example, Asian Deaf, Black Deaf, American Indian Deaf, and Latino Deaf communities' experiences with resilience and challenges are dissimilar from those of Deaf Caucasians because they experience additional exclusion and discrimination on the basis of their race/ethnicity (Mertens, 2009; Moore, 2011; Paris, 2012; Williamson, 2007). Moore (2011) and Williamson (2007) confirm that multicultural awareness among Deaf youth of color promotes personal growth.

Educational background is also factored into the identity of Deaf youth. The identity issues, for example, among those youth who went to mainstream schools are different from the issues among those who went to Deaf residential schools. Youth who went to residential schools for the Deaf highly value Deaf culture and stress the importance of ASL, while those who went to mainstream schools do not hold the same values. It is therefore important that Deaf youth have opportunities to process their experiences by examining Deaf cultures to better understand their identity (Williamson, 2007).

In reporting how they coped with marginalisation, Deaf people of color also foreground culturally-salient strengths. For example, Paris (2012) researched how American Indian Deaf women coped by identifying with culturally valued resources, as illustrated in the reports of three women, Beulah, Julie and Cortelia:

> Beulah saw the concepts of 'sun' and 'prayer' as foundations for strength that Deaf Native Americans needed . . . Deaf American Indian women need strength and prayer every morning. The sun strengthens them each day.
>
> Through the concept of a dream catcher where 'bad dreams fade in the sunlight' while 'good dreams are held,' Julie presented spiritual positivity and protection. . . .
>
> Cortelia portrayed spiritual strength by using the connection she had with her daughter and said 'Our bond is strong and models the bond between all Native American women' (p. 108).

11.1.5 Cultural Adherence: Diversity and Oneness

American Deaf culture, also referred to as the Deaf community, includes an acceptance of deafness, an understanding of the needs of the Deaf, and communicating in ASL. Even so, all Deaf people are not the same, nor do they necessarily share identical values. As illustrated in the words of I. King Jordan, former president of Gallaudet University, Deaf culture encompasses this diversity:

> There are many, many ways to be Deaf in the world . . . there are many ways, successes, failures, different ways that people deal with [cochlear] implants. At Gallaudet University, we have a Cochlear Implant Education Center for the elementary school. . . we mix instruction in American Sign Language with instruction in speech on listening. It's been very, very successful. I believe it's a model of what we should be doing with young children

> who are implanted. But we also have high school students, university students and faculty members, all of whom are using implants. It's just technology. It really hasn't changed them... For 200 years, the public has been misinformed about Deaf people. And as Tom [Humphries] said, you know, they think everybody's like the one Deaf person they know (Conan, 2005).

Because the majority of Deaf children are born to hearing parents, the passing on of Deaf culture is not typically familial, but from contact with other Deaf people in the community (Lane, Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996; Padden & Humphries, 2005), underscoring the importance of organized opportunities for interaction and cultural engagement. Williamson's (2007) study of Deaf students demonstrated the importance of developing, changing, and/or maintaining cultural support systems and providing role models for Deaf students and families. For example, the National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA) hosted a collegiate Black Deaf Student Leadership Institute for college students and a Youth Empowerment Summit for school aged students. Those students received intensive training, attended cultural events, and mingled with the NBDA conferees to gain a better understanding of their own identity and culture.

The Deaf community has its own regional, state, and national organizations all of which foster a shared Deaf culture. They host their own events ranging from community picnics to theatrical performances. Sports are also an important aspect of Deaf people's lives, providing "a vehicle of acculturation for the Deaf child, a shared experience, a source of Deaf pride, and an avenue for understanding customs and values in the Deaf world" (Lane et al., 1996, p. 131). Szarkowski and Brice (2005) have pointed out the importance of parents with Deaf children accessing ASL, as well as interacting with Deaf communities to be part of something larger. They want to be part of something they are really proud of, that they will fight for, and that they will sacrifice for.

11.1.6 A Macroculture of Social Justice: The Ideal and the Reality

The rights of Deaf youth are protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). IDEA focuses on the educational needs of culturally diverse students and students with disabilities to ensure that supplementary services are provided when they are placed in the least restrictive environment. According to the law, Deaf and hard of hearing students must be provided supplemental services such as sign language interpreters, testing modifications, and note takers in order to ensure their full participation in the classrooms. They are entitled to participate in the individual educational planning (IEP), a plan based on the assessment of each Deaf student that outlines appropriate educational services, to ensure that supplemental services or accommodations are made to meet their academic needs (Latham, Latham, & Mandlawitz, 2008). This

suggests a macro-culture that is facilitative of positive adjustment to the challenges of Deafness.

In actuality, the provisions of IDEA are not fully implemented in all US schools and have led to negative effects because the term "least restrictive environment" is often interpreted to mean that Deaf children should be educated in mainstream settings that do not provide the social support or promote direct use of a visual language that is available in schools for the Deaf. This is of concern, given Ramsey's (1997) findings of the isolation and ineffective education experiences of Deaf children mainstreamed in hearing schools.

Historically, linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with disabilities have not received quality multicultural education in the US, reflecting the patterns of institutional racism and cultural ignorance that are consistently evident in the American educational system (Bodner-Johnson & Sass-Lehrer, 1999; Simms et al., 2008; Williamson, 2007). These practices of inequity result in lower achievement for these students. Research has underscored the need for Deaf organizations to develop and maintain partnership with schools to ensure social justice among Deaf youth of color (Moore, 2011; Williamson, 2007).

Numerous organizations for the Deaf, such as the NBDA, advocate for the rights of culturally diverse Deaf children. Such organizations host youth and collegiate leadership training programs and recruit role models and leaders in local communities for Black Deaf children and their families. Additionally, many Deaf advocates sit on advisory boards and serve as officers in the advocacy organizations of the Deaf. These advocates have a strong commitment toward seeing that social justice is realized for culturally diverse populations. Their involvement helps strengthen the relationship between culturally diverse organizations of Deaf citizens/professionals and the institutions and organizations of the Deaf to collaboratively and proactively advocate the rights of culturally diverse Deaf children. A participant in Moore's (2011) study remarked:

> The benefit of being a member of NBDA was that I established an annual conference for Black Deaf high school students... I have discussed with NBDA President on how we prepare Deaf youth as leaders and what courses we should provide to those students (pp. 176–177).

Another Black Deaf male participant in Moore's study reiterated the importance of involvement in such organizations to develop a sense of community and advocate for Deaf rights:

> I have been involved in three organizations of the Deaf – NBDA, National Association of the Deaf, and Indiana Association of the Deaf. I [end up] running the meetings, leading group discussions, collaborating with others, revising the bylaws, developing the budget, and so forth (p. 175).

Deaf youth who have opportunities for leadership feel an obligation to give something back to their communities, as they value their culture. As another participant in Moore's study observed:

> We should be respected, as we are culturally diverse. We are Black Deaf people. We are part of the mainstream community. We are valued members, regardless of who we are.

> We cannot sit back and let our Black Deaf children suffer stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. . .. We all have a responsibility to educate people of this world about our [culture]. I am so blessed that I have been able to give something back to the community. (pp. 225–226).

11.1.7 Parental Support of Deaf Youths' Power and Control

Several studies have confirmed the importance of parental involvement in the lives of Deaf persons and how such involvement facilitates youth agency (Moore, 2011; Szarkowski & Brice, 2005; Williamson, 2007). Advocates and members of the American Deaf community recognize the need to help parents focus on their child's strengths in order to foster a positive self-image and promote power and control among children. For example:

> I have been resilient. My mother has been a strong voice in the state where we lived. She used to be involved in politics. She fought for the rights for Deaf people. She was instrumental in establishing Deaf services. My family is my strength (Moore, 2011, p. 163).

Likewise, Paris's (2012) study illustrates that parental support of youth agency potentiates continued power and control when youth mature, also in ways that contribute meaningfully to the Deaf community:

> Beulah said that the process of planting and harvesting provided her with an outlet for relieving stress and obtaining enjoyment in life. She commented, 'planting food is like my support. When I am gardening, I forgot problems and enjoy the activity. I am grateful to my mother and father for forcing me to learn on the farm.' Her self-sufficiency was demonstrated in her approach to provide for herself not only with food, but also in securing employment. ... With the ability of tackling tasks, she became an Elder of her own community (p. 52).

Power and control can be marred by inadequate professional services. For example, a 2001 survey showed only 52 % of Hispanic Deaf children received early intervention services before age three (National Center for Special Education Research, 2013). Scholl (2007) reported that misdiagnosing deafness as mental retardation or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, delayed language acquisition and speech services. Likewise, inappropriate educational placement occurred among Deaf children of color who did not receive early intervention services.

Szarkowski and Brice's (2005) study of parents' early experiences with their Deaf children highlighted the tensions of power and control that frequently occur between professionals and the families of Deaf children, particularly when Deaf children are not accorded their rights and/or when professionals hold the power and respond to families with patronizing attitudes. Szarkowski and Brice elaborate on how

> One parent in the present study indicated that she had never thought about the positives, because all of her appointments with doctors, audiologists, etc., focused on the degree of loss and the level of impairment. This same parent, two weeks later, wrote that asking her to

identify positives had changed her way of thinking about her child. Professionals need to remember that "Deaf children are children first, then they are deaf" (pp. 62–63).

Conclusion

Research with Deaf youth, conducted with a transformative lens, demonstrates the various strategies that Deaf youth use, in conjunction with their elders and Deaf community, to resolve tensions associated with the challenges of Deafness and to enhance the positive nature of their development. In short, adjusting well to deafness requires multiple resilience processes that are interdependent and respectful of the risks that are unique to being Deaf. Importantly, coping well with these risks becomes even more challenging for youth of colour. In this regard, it is imperative that young deaf people – also those of colour – are given an opportunity to process their experiences of oppression/marginalisation to ensure that they have a place in society. Moreover, Deaf youth require advocates and mentors who understand and celebrate Deaf culture, provide emotional support, guide meaningful education, and promote personal growth. Research with Deaf youth of colour points to there being value in mentors/advocates sharing ethnic roots with the youth they advocate for.

The research reviewed in this chapter reveals the integral connections between relationships, particularly with the Deaf community, and access to resources in the form of good schools, good teachers, effective visual communication, and role models. The multi-layered nature of identity in the Deaf community is evident in the rich experiences shared by members of the Black Deaf and Native American Deaf communities. The Deaf community recognizes the strength in coming together and providing a safe place for Deaf youth to reflect on their identify, learn about their culture(s), and form a cohesive whole that can advocate for the best interests of, and social justice for, the Deaf.

In the American context, Deaf children have a right to receive quality education when they go to either residential schools for the Deaf or mainstream schools. Also, they are entitled to receive supplemental services when needed. Within this macro-culture, ASL enables American Deaf youth to develop skills for learning and for life, particularly when they become involved in the Deaf community. Although this macroculture of support is not always realised, research evidence suggests that resilience processes are enhanced when American Deaf youth and their families are able to obtain proper services, advice, and guidance in ASL through appropriate partnerships (e.g., with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management). Moreover, when parents are invited to work *with* doctors and/or other professionals, they are likely to gain power and control over their role as advocates for and teachers of their children. When parents are able to

(continued)

effectively communicate with their Deaf child, family cohesion can be increased. Thus, in addition to providing Deaf youth with supports that resonate with their unique needs and Deaf culture, their parents need to be engaged respectfully. As noted earlier, despite this ostensibly supportive macro-culture, many challenges remain for the effective development for Deaf youth, and especially for Deaf youth of color. In other words, there is a need for continued research into the resilience processes of Deaf youth, particularly those of color, and how macro- and micro-cultures can better support these processes.

In this regard, the transformative paradigm provides a framework for thinking through the assumptions that guide research focused on social justice. The implications of the transformative paradigm's ethical assumption include the need for cultural respect in light of the diversity within Deaf communities and the need to support the members of the Deaf community to enable their authentic engagement in the research (Mertens, 2009). This paradigm is therefore important in the continued exploration into the complexities of the resilience processes of racial/ethnic minority Deaf children and youth, and their families.

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Chapter 12
Barriers to Resilience Processes: Understanding the Experiences and Challenges of Former Child Soldiers Integrating into Canadian Society

Shelly Whitman and Linda Liebenberg

It is estimated that there are currently 250,000 children involved in armed conflict internationally (United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, 2008). Furthermore, at the end of 2008 there were approximately 32 million refugees globally (UNHCR, 2008/2009). Many of these individuals seek safe refuge in Canada. Canada receives between 240,000 and 265,000 immigrants and refugees annually (Statistics Canada, 2009). In 2011, 15,600 refugees were admitted to Canada, approximately 40 % of the total number of applications received that year (IRB, 2011). It is often overlooked that refugees coming to Canada from conflict zones may also have been used in conflict as child soldiers.

A child soldier is defined by the Paris Principles as, "any person below 18 years of age who is or has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities" (UNICEF, 2007, p. 7). While the majority of child soldiers are believed to be in African countries, it is also a practice used in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. It is estimated that 40 % of the child soldiers that are used are girls (McKay & Mazurana, 2004).

Children undertake a variety of roles within armed groups, and are exposed to a variety of traumatic experiences which impact negatively on their mental health and psychosocial well-being, resulting in increased prevalence rates of mental disorders, including mood, anxiety, and conduct disorders (Tol, Song, & Jordans, 2013). Effective intervention is challenged by the diverse and complex ways in

S. Whitman (✉)
Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada
e-mail: shelly@childsoldiers.org

L. Liebenberg
Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada

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which former child soldiers (FCSs) exercise personal agency in the course of their experiences. As Mark Drumbl (2012) explains, "the portrayal of the child soldier as a faultless passive victim is unduly reductive … [that] occludes, flattens and conceals details… which are salient and matter" (p. 11; see also Abdullah et al., 1997; Boyden & Mann, 2005; Machel, 1996). As with policy and practice elsewhere, Canadian responses in terms of culturally embedded legislation, services and general public response is more-often-than-not misaligned with the needs of refugees who are FCSs (Boyden & Mann, 2005).

While the use of children in armed forces is a global problem, this chapter's focus is on the experiences of FCSs from Sub-Saharan Africa, specifically South Sudan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). To this end, we draw on the experiences of resilient, African FCSs who were refugees to Canada and who participated in two separate exploratory sessions, focused on the refugee and integration experiences of FCSs to Canada, conducted by the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative in 2010 and 2012. For the purposes of this chapter, we conducted a secondary data analysis of the transcriptions with a view to exploring how migrating FCSs' interaction with Canadian culture potentially hinders their resilience processes as shaped by the heritage cultures that they bring with them to Canada. Put differently, we explore how Canadian culture is less facilitative of the resilience processes of FCSs given its profound differences from traditional African cultures. In this way, the chapter also provides an illustration of how a clash of cultural traditions can complicate resilience processes.

12.1 The Cultural Contexts and Resilience Processes of African FCSs

While numerous differences exist culturally amongst the communities from which child soldiers come, some cultural features are salient across groups in an African context. In general, African youth come from collectivist societies where key attachments can be quite diverse, extending beyond parents and immediate nuclear families (Mann, 2001). Youth are typically expected to make their extended families and communities of origin proud, in part by gaining an education and contributing to familial and community upkeep (Theron & Theron, 2013). Furthermore, in numerous African cultures, meaning-making of life events is attached to family relationships in ways that are not as evident in more individualist and industrialised nations such as Canada. Numerous studies have highlighted the key role of caring guardians (nuclear and extended family as well as non-family members) in the capacity of youth from post-conflict settings to resist the effects of community stigma and exclusion (see, for example, Betancourt, 2012; Boyden, Eyber, Feeny, & Scott, 2004).

Socialisation of children in collectivist cultures fosters team work and cooperation with a goal of working towards collective benefits (Boyden et al., 2004). This

approach to collective survival and wellbeing is ordinarily maintained in conflict settings, and often forms the basis of both indoctrination into armed groups (Betancourt & Khan, 2008) and maintaining wellbeing in contexts of combat (Denov & Maclure, 2009; Johnson, Morantz, Seignior, Zayed, & Whitman, 2012; Maclure & Denov, 2006). Traditional child-elder interaction is typically framed by cultural understandings: that respect for and adherence to elders is reciprocated with a valuing of children, who are therefore to be protected and nurtured by elders. These cultural contracts are often exploited by militant leaders who demand loyalty and obedience in exchange for protection (Betancourt & Kahn, 2008).

While the cultural framework of many African child combatants may be more collectivist, this framework does not negate the agency of youth themselves, who often draw on personal capacity and strength to navigate physical and psychological challenges and dangers they face (Denov & Maclure, 2009). Importantly, youth engagement in combat can bolster personal empowerment, developing personal resources such as self-efficacy and confidence and improve social status (Denov & Maclure, 2009).

Nevertheless, research focused on the positive adaptation of FCSs post conflict has underscored community reaction to the return and integration of FCSs as one of the most critical factors underlying the wellbeing of these youth (Betancourt, 2012). The importance of community acceptance and support of youth underscores the role of collectivism in their fostering positive outcomes. The interaction of collectivist culture (including respect for elders) with agentic experiences (that have challenged the motivation of elders) results in a complex historical background for youth entering contexts such as Canada.

12.2 Canada, Immigration, and Youth

Canada provides refugee status to individuals in need of protection – such as FCSs – as per the UN Convention Relating to Status of Refugees (1951) (CCR, 2008). The experiences of refugees to Canada varies greatly and is influenced by numerous factors, including country of origin, age, socio-economic status, education, whether they are accompanied by family members, and physical and mental health. The onus is on applicants to prove they are being persecuted in their country of origin which can be an arduous process, particularly in instances where applicants have fled war-torn contexts. Average processing time is about 16 months (UNHCR, 2008/2009) and can cost refugees up to CAD$10,000 for costs related to their application processing, transportation, and medical examinations (CCR, 2008). While refugee applicants are provided loans by the Canadian government, it is expected that these will be repaid with interest within 12 months of arriving in Canada (see also http://ccrweb.ca/en/transportation-loans). Some applicants who manage to enter Canada before submitting their application can be "stuck" for years without any permanent status in Canada (CCR, 2002), severely limiting access to

basic resources (including medical care) and impacting negatively on employment options (CCR, 2012) and capacity to integrate with Canadian society.

Important sources of support for newcomers, include friends, family, faith communities and other refugees and immigrants (CCR, 2002). Most must adjust to an individualist consumer culture, and more importantly, struggle against racism deeply rooted in Canadian society (CCR, 2012). In addition to limiting integration, this affects employment, housing, and how contributions are valued, impacting sense of civic engagement and responsibility (CCR, 2002; Rousseau, Crepeau, Foxen, & Houle, 2002). For FCS this experience is additionally complex.

In 2000, Canada became the first country to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict which establishes 18 as the minimum age for recruitment and deployment of soldiers (UNCRC, 2002). Yet, many of Canada's immigration laws and policies appear to contradict this protocol, rendering FCSs vulnerable to the threat of prosecution and deportation (Adleman, 2002; Bryan & Denov, 2011).

Consequently, no accurate data exists regarding the numbers or experiences of FCS migrants. Senator Dallaire, a key advocate for increased awareness regarding the use of child soldiers following his experiences commanding the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), argues that Canadian immigration laws need to change so that FCSs are not restricted from coming to Canada:

> If you have to start your immigration process with hiding the fact that you were a former child soldier we have a fundamental mistake to address in our immigration process. One of the most horrific things is living under the threat that one day some person might say something and call attention to the fact that you were a former child soldier and how this might be used as grounds to extradite you from Canada (The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, 2010).

Revisions to existing legislation that potentially allow FCSs now living in Canada to be prosecuted for offences committed as minors while engaged in hostilities would possibly alter the culture of their integration into Canada in two ways. The first would be the capacity for FCSs to talk about their experiences should they choose. And second, these changes would facilitate the establishment of services and supports more closely aligned with the needs of FCSs. More importantly it would create a social space for FCSs to manage their experiences in ways that would better facilitate healthy psychosocial outcomes. As Betancourt (2012) points out, when communities are accepting, FCSs fare well. If however, societies are not accepting of refugees and in particular FCSs, then the integration and settlement experience is difficult at best, and at worst, resilience processes that can potentiate positive outcomes inhibited.

12.3 Resilience Theory and the Challenges Faced By FCSs in Canada

In this section, we report a secondary data analysis of the transcribed reflections of 30 African FCSs residing in Canada. We used the lens of Ungar's Seven Tensions (Ungar et al., 2007) to conduct this analysis and to better understand how Canadian legislative and cultural practices challenge resolution of these tensions, given the differences that often exist between Africentric heritage cultures and that of Canada. To explore these experiences, we draw on statements made by participants who attended 2010 and 2012 focus group sessions hosted by the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative. The first included only FCSs from South Sudan and the second female FCSs from South Sudan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Overall 30 FCSs participated in these sessions; 13 females and 17 males. The purpose of these meetings was to explore FCSs' experiences of integrating into Canadian life. At the time of the meetings, participants' ages ranged from 18 to 35 years[1] and their length of stay in Canada ranged between 2 and 20 years. All participants were invited because they were then leading lives that showed positive psychosocial outcomes that reflected resilient transitions.

12.3.1 Power and Control

Allied to their African heritage cultures' veneration of education, all interviewed FCSs prioritised receiving an education in Canada. In many African communities, education is seen as critical to future success, and as a means of constructively shaping improved life worlds for all (Hoppers, 2001), in ways that are perhaps not considered in Canadian culture. As Jane[2] explained, "Education is not only needed for a job, but it shapes how you see the world."

FCSs perceived education as key to feeling in control of future destinies and having the power to move towards these destinies, with concomitant access to social-emotional and physical resources. However, this aspiration was often frustrated by the realities of the Canadian context and the challenges of adjustment as newcomers. Kuol explained,

> missing home can affect attentiveness in school or university. At first I could not keep up with the pace of the lectures, I had to seek assistance from other students and professors regularly.

[1] While all young adults, the age range of participants is still quite diverse. Fear of prosecution due to engagement in combat, meant that engaging resilient FCS participants was challenging. Because of this age restrictions were not included in the recruitment of participants.

[2] Pseudonym.

Challenges included practical, emotional, and financial difficulties, but also extended to cultural differences. For instance, in participants' contexts of origin, education does not demand parental engagement, while in Canada education is highly dependent on this. As Jane further explained, these differences result in a misalignment between the capacity of refugee families and the Canadian education system that can place strain on youth and their attempts at gaining an education:

> The school system in Canada is set up in such a way that it expects all parents of kids to be educated. For many of the refugee children that are in Canada this may not be the case and then it appears as if the parent is not supporting the child. However, this is not the case, but for someone who is illiterate and does not know the culture how can they support their child in the Canadian education system?

Additionally, financial demands stemming from the Canadian refugee system (see *Canada, Immigration and Youth* earlier) threaten this educational possibility. Michel talked about the challenges in balancing financial responsibilities with the desire to achieve:

> I attended two different high schools because we could not afford to stay in our first house, so we had to move. Because I had to work three jobs for my mom and I to survive, my marks suffered at school and I almost did not get into university.

12.3.2 Access to Material Resources

For many FCSs, life in Canada held the promise of access to material resources: achieving an education meant opportunities for gainful employment that would facilitate access to resources for both those living in Canada, and for their family and community in their country of origin. This promise coloured how some FCSs experienced their Canadian peers who were perceived, by Michel for example, as "spoiled, ungrateful and disconnected from the real world". He further reflected:

> high school was a strange experience, I felt like Canadians complain a lot, about little things. One day a friend was complaining about her cell phone, she was upset her parents bought her a black one instead of a pink one. That night I called my sister in Uganda and she was telling me she needed money for food. . .the contrast was so strange to me.

In African cultures it is understood that family members living abroad have access to resources and finances that are not accessible to those who remain behind. Given the collectivist nature of these communities it is expected that money will be sent back home. In fact, in 2012 remittances to Africa outnumbered the amount of official development assistance received by African nations from Western donors (Doyle, 17 April 2013).

Many FCSs, however, felt that expectations of what Canada would offer were unrealistic. Participants described how depictions of Canadian life, as recounted by Canadian officials, were idealistic and excluded adequate descriptions of the difficult aspects of life in Canada, including actual financial demands of life in Canada in relation to personal income. This mismatch between expectations and reality

became a challenge for FCSs as they struggled to explain the reality of Canadian (or Western) financial systems to those within their country of origin. As Kuol explained, "When you are here people back home think you are better off here and expect you to send money."

The burden of restricted finances was aggravated in that the apparent financial good will of the Canadian refugee system is often misunderstood. Michel explained the consequences of this, saying:

> The Government of Canada makes you pay back loans for bringing you here as a refugee. So you arrive and are already in debt from the get-go. This was not explained to us when we came. A bill came in one day and we had to focus on paying it back. This bill even included chocolate chip cookies and a bottle of water that we had at the embassy when we landed...although I was at school, I had to work three jobs to help pay off the debt we owed. The debt kills your credit so that you start off already on a bad foot.

Additionally there are restrictions to finding employment for refugees to Canada. Such restrictions are compounded by cultural differences in prioritisation of work experience and self-promotion. Kuol, for example, described how the biases related to work experience undermine the ability to become financially independent:

> finding jobs is difficult here because you need experience for everything. At home, you are not expected to have the experience, they train you on the job to give you the experience.

Kuol explained further how cultural understandings may also limit your ability to achieve success:

> in my culture you do not "self-promote" yourself to others. However, in Canadian culture you must learn to sell yourself to get jobs, scholarships and opportunities.

12.3.3 Identity

Many participants voiced personal identities that reflected collectivist culture which informed a sense of civic responsibility to community. For some this identity, together with experiences of war, shaped their outlook on life, desire to achieve, willingness to trust others, and a tenacious spirit. These collectivist identities were, however, challenged by the realities of the formal Canadian systems and individualist culture that FCSs have to navigate. Abiel explained:

> The reason I came to Canada was because of educational aspirations and [to] contribute back to society. What I found was that it was very difficult here. When you come to Canada as a child affected by war you never had the education that other kids had. I struggled a bit and was frustrated, should I continue or should I just quit. But my determination, as a result of my struggles, made me to continue to study and then I went on to college.

12.3.4 Relationships

Coming from traditionally collectivist cultures and close-knit communities, relationships are crucial to the resilience processes of African FCSs (Betancourt, 2012; Boyden et al., 2004). Yet for many FCSs, their experience in creating and maintaining relationships in Canada, and with family and friends in their countries of origin, was challenging, in part because Canadian culture prioritises peer relations above familial ones. Elizabeth recounted the challenges that young Sudanese refugees faced in this regard:

> [Youth in Canada] are more influenced by their friends than their families. More concerned with appearing cool to their friends and parents feel like they have no control over them. In traditional Sudanese culture, the youth listen to their elders, but in Canadian society this all changes.

Making friends in Canada is further complicated, in part due to issues of identity, Canadians' perceptions of immigrants and refugees, and FCSs' unfamiliarity with Westerners. Michel, for example, recalled:

> it took a long time to make friends. When I enrolled in high school it was challenging as the new African kid, the odd one out in school. The other Africans had been here a long time and we didn't gel.

Others, such as Kuol, remarked:

> at first I could not differentiate people in Canada, especially girls. I was accustomed to identifying people based on height. So, I had to learn to distinguish different features such as hair, eyes, etc. Prior to this it was hard for me to remember people's names.

Maintaining relationships was exacerbated by FCSs' intrusive memories of their traumatic past. For example, Michel explained:

> I still get nightmares, it is hard for my friends to deal with. . . people just do not understand and it makes it difficult to form relationships. I do not know what it is like to sleep through an entire night.

FCSs foregrounded the resilience-supporting value of strong and supportive relationships, ranging from friends, to professors, colleagues at university, or members of their communities. In this regard, Michel recounted a supportive relationship with a chaplain at school:

> at a high school I attended, I connected to people through the help of the chaplain. She was more helpful to me than anyone else that I encountered up 'til then. She was very open, her role was to be the religious and spiritual support for kids and to give advice when kids reach out. This chaplain pushed me towards university and success in public speaking.

Particularly female participants argued that it was critical to be afforded opportunity to articulate their wartime experiences in a safe setting. Unfortunately, many FCSs struggled to experience such opportunities. Kiki, for example, had resided in Canada for 20 years before she shared her stories with anyone. As Kuol stated, part of this reluctance related to FCS experiences being foreign to the average Canadian:

> I do not want to tell people in Canada my story because I do not want them to be sad. I am not sure how much people here can handle.

Yout elaborated:

> the issue with child soldiers here in Canada is not that they don't want to speak, but that they are not aware that their stories are welcome.

This is compounded by FCSs' concern that acknowledging combat experiences may create barriers for immigration. Peter recounted the fear he experienced in relaying his military experience both during his refugee application process, and after arriving in Canada. He explained that while in the refugee camps applicants were discouraged from identifying as FCSs when applying for immigration to Canada. The belief was that this experience is viewed negatively by Canadian authorities:

> if you talk about your experience as a soldier, they will not accept your applications and you have to hide this fact...the immigration authorities are always instructing you on what to say.

He elaborated, saying that:

> in Canada we are told that they don't like people who have been involved in military things. So, if you say you were a soldier you might be rejected.

12.3.5 Cultural Adherence

For many FCSs, the challenges of coping with individualistic, Canadian culture was overwhelming and isolating. For example, participants commented on the cultural differences related to the perception of time in their home country versus Canada. As Kuol described, "Everything here in Canada is rushed. We are not accustomed to such perceptions in Africa."

Others felt strongly about the absence of collectivist values. Elizabeth explained "In South Sudan, we work collectively, every decision you make for yourself must be framed in terms of how it affects your whole family. This is not the case in Canada." Similarly, as Jane noted, notions of family and community are much different in Canada than in an African context:

> back home your definition of family is very big, it includes all of your extended family. But here in Canada your definition of family is much smaller and this can present a lot of difficulties in terms of access and benefits.

Cultural differences also complicated interpersonal interactions. Kuol, for example, explained how he has not had a girlfriend since his arrival in Canada:

> I have not had any girlfriends here, even though I may like a girl. This is because of traditional expectations of my family...it may be very difficult for the girl to meet the expectations due to the cultural differences and I would not want to put a girl through this ...

While balancing integration with cultural traditions can be difficult, successful navigation seems to call for deep reflection and critical awareness of the differences of culture and traditions. Michel spoke of this duality:

> I have kept some of my traditions, but try to balance this with Canadian culture. My culture is very religious and I grew up with rigid thoughts, being in Canada has caused me to question a lot of my beliefs.

12.3.6 Social Justice and Cohesion

With regards to social justice, most participants were concerned with how they could contribute positively to their countries of origin rather than Canadian society. As Jane explained:

> We live physically here in Canada but emotionally we live back at home. People want to go back, but only if there is a conducive environment to participate.

Caught in this tension between wanting to contribute to their home country but feeling barred from doing so, some respondents relayed how their Canadian experience affected their views on how to resolve conflicts in their home countries. Kuol relayed:

> My Canadian experience has taught me that I can reach out to others and advocate for others. I believe I can learn here in Canada and take back these experiences to help my country . . . I want to give back, use my knowledge and incorporate this to solve problems in my home country. This is my driving force to obtain an education here in Canada.

Conclusion

For many African FCSs now living in Canada as refugees, there was a strong contrast between their heritage culture and the more individualist life-world of Canada. As evident in participating FCSs' reflections, this disparity complicated their resolution of the tensions informing resilience. Simultaneously, however, resilience processes were supported by the interaction of the traditional culture of their childhood homes and resources made available in the Canadian context. For example, the collectivist culture of their childhood with the related sense of civic responsibility formed the basis of most participating FCSs' resilience processes. A Canadian education, was typically regarded as the vehicle that would provide the capacity – the power—to access resources and importantly, to shape the future course of their lives, including their capacity to make meaningful contributions to their home communities. In this way, it is the financial and educational potentialities of their Canadian context that potentiates resilience processes for FCSs. These three adaptive components of civic responsibility, personal capacity, and control of their future are closely tied to family, home community and

(continued)

Canada: the access to resources that education provides also means that resources can be sent home, and knowledge can be used to inform peacekeeping and restricting efforts.

As noted earlier, adherence to heritage culture within the Canadian context can place exceptional strain on FCSs. When FCSs adhere to a collectivist culture of sharing resources for example, they face obstacles in the enactment of this culture. Formal Canadian systems, such as immigration and education, are structured in ways that complicate and challenge navigation to resources. Furthermore, both formal and informal systems (i.e. immigration laws and communities) limit the capacity of FCSs to negotiate for appropriate social, educational and employment resources. When home communities fail to understand the realities of the Canadian context, the expectation of financial support from the newcomers can compound their struggle to integrate into their new contact and hamper resolution of their combat experiences. In this way, resulting cultural and contextual conflicts stand to threaten the resilience processes of FCS.

Many of the challenges and resilience processes of FCSs are not dissimilar to those of other refugee youth coming from conflict settings. However, the conflict between heritage and Canadian cultural and policy frameworks impact FCSs in important ways, in particular their emotional and psychological healing process, and the role of meaning making. As Boyden and Mann (2005) explain, the process of meaning making is often culturally informed. When personal culture and broader contextual culture conflict, this process can be severely hampered (Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990). Existing Canadian legislation has resulted in a culture of silence around the experiences of FCSs. By contrast heritage African cultures are ordinarily ones of expression and sharing, including traumatic experiences. Furthermore, healing within the African culture of many FCSs is community-based rather than service-based, as is the case in Canadian culture. The practice of meeting individually with a therapist as part of the healing process can be at odds with the African heritage cultural practices that inform the resilience processes of FCSs. These findings are key when considered in light of the fact that a recent report by the Canadian Council for Refugees (2011) identified access to employment and support for mental health and trauma related issues as top priorities for refugees in Canada.

In summary, we have recounted the viewpoints of a small number of FCSs living in Canada as refugees and the challenges they faced during their integration into Canada. Their experiences suggest that Canadian law and policy with regards to immigration and service provision must be adapted to assist FCSs rather than ostracize or alienate them. Such changes will help create a culture of service and social context that can facilitate the resilience processes of FCSs through an open and supportive environment. Collectively,

(continued)

these changes may allow for better integration of heritage cultures with the Canadian context, where African cultural practices can be accounted for in formal and informal supports in ways that further potential resilience processes.

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Chapter 13
Effects of Microcultural Environments of Violence on Resilient Responses Among Adolescents and Young Adults in the City of Itagui, Colombia

Wendy Kliewer, Roberto Mejia, and Yolanda Torres

Historically, Colombian culture can be defined as the collection of hard workers, honest and talented people, devoted to production of Spanish music and intellectual activities, and whose values were guided by strong religious beliefs from the Roman Catholic Church, particularly in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Since 1910, those cultural values were replaced progressively by a society that was more concerned about material and economic success fuelled by an accelerated industrialization. The rapid urban growth was caused by rural farmers and their families immigrating to larger urban centres to find better economic and social conditions. By 1960, cities like Medellin and Itagui experienced a rapid population explosion, developing a sense of optimism and greed amongst the richest families in the country. Nonetheless, members of less affluent neighbourhoods inhabited by families of ex-farmers, struggled to keep their traditional customs and values of respect, family loyalty, and moral character. Outlaw groups (i.e., guerrillas and urban gangs) coupled with poor and crowded "*comunas*" or low-income neighbourhoods as well as an increasing influence of narcotraficking, created the perfect environment for a culture of violence (Melo, 1995) that extends to today.

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W. Kliewer (✉)
Department of Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA
e-mail: wkliewer@vcu.edu

R. Mejia
Hubert Department of Global Health, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA
e-mail: roberto.mejia@emory.edu

Y. Torres
Center for Excellence on Research in Mental Health, CES University, Medellín, Antioquia, Colombia

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In this chapter we hypothesize that a culture of violence in Itagui, Colombia is the consequence of desensitization and legitimization of violence as valid strategy to cope or escape a harmful microculture of violence in the family. Resilient responses may vary as a result of poverty, gang activity, drug abuse, and lack of educational and employment opportunities. Using a community-based survey we explore how the current changes in family function and structure serves as a micro-cultural context of violence (MCCV). We also examine risk and protective factors that distinguish those who are resilient from those who are not, and discuss how the culture of violence and the culture of specific *comunas*, both supported and obstructed resilience processes.

13.1 The Micro-cultural Context of Family Violence in Colombia

During the last 20 years, the structure and function of families in the country has been modified as a result of escalated violence. A traditional family originally had been defined as one where the adults were married and the father worked and provided for his family. Mothers were more concerned with the traditional matriarchal role, educating and raising their children. This traditional cultural representation of family has since been replaced by single-mother families with greater financial and educational responsibilities. Children are often raised by extended family members or are placed in community child-care centres. This new family dynamic has placed the traditional family values of cohesion, loyalty, and mutual respect in jeopardy. A culture of violence that begins at home (i.e., through domestic violence and corporal punishment approaches) has further weakened the role of the family as a protective factor for conflict resolution and violent behavior among its members (Barney, 1999).

13.2 The Cultural Context of Resilience: Evidence from Research in Latin American Countries

Studies in Central and South America and internationally have revealed cultural factors, that when present, function as resilience processes, protecting youth from the deleterious effects of violence exposure. These include religiosity, family cohesion and support, perceived safety, and neighbourhood cohesion (cf., Werner & Smith, 1992). For example, in a large community-based study of over 17,000 youth living in Central America, Kliewer and Murrelle (2007) found that a personal relationship with God was one of the strongest protective factors against substance use in the face of multiple risks. This finding was supported by growing evidence that religiosity is associated with better mental and physical health among adolescents (Jennings, Kliewer, Gsell, & Worthington, in press). Similarly, among a large

sample of youth living in Central America, family cohesion and parental monitoring attenuated the relation between exposure to community violence and drug use (Kliewer et al., 2006). Kliewer, Murrelle, Mejia, Torres, and Angold (2001) found that family support protected Colombian youth against symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Neighbourhood cohesion – a culturally valued resource – plays a protective role for youth in several ways, including exerting independent effects on adjustment; affecting proximal processes such as family relationships, which in turn affect adjustment; or interacting with risk to attenuate associations between risk and adjustment. In one of the few studies to examine the protective effects of neighbourhood cohesion in the context of community violence exposure, Kliewer and colleagues (2004) found that neighbourhood cohesion was associated with greater feelings of acceptance by maternal caregivers, and lower levels of anxiety and depression in youth over time. For caregivers, living in the most impoverished housing communities was associated with lower levels of collective efficacy, which is one measure of neighbourhood cohesion (Kliewer, 2013). Collective efficacy, in turn, affects messages caregivers relay to their adolescent offspring about the acceptability of violence as a coping strategy (Johnson, Finigan, Bradshaw, Haynie, & Cheng, 2011; Kliewer, 2013).

13.3 A Culture of Violence in Itagui, Colombia: Evidence of Resilience

Founded in 1743, Itagui is nestled south of the picturesque Aburra Valley near the outskirts of Medellin, Colombia, the second largest city in Colombia. With a population of 270,000, Itagui is one of the most violent cities in Colombia, and indeed in Central and South America with a homicide rate of 166 per 100,000 in 2011 (Itagui Annual Report, 2011–2012). Medellin and Itagui have experienced decades of conflict between government forces and anti-government insurgent groups (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012). This violence has been primarily due to the narcotics industry. By the 1970s and 1980s, both Medellin and Itagui had become the international epicentre of the cocaine trade, serving as the hub for cocaine processing and financing (Roldán, 2003). By the mid-1980s to early 1990s the violence had evolved into a war for political control between the narcotics industry and the state, and represents the most violent phase of the narcotics industry's rise:

> ... [it] converted selective areas of Medellín into something resembling a war zone. The city's lower class neighborhoods and in particular its poorer young men emerged as the primary targets of prolonged bloodshed, altering in dramatic fashion the configuration of urban spaces of sociability, communal interaction, and memory. (Roldán, 2003, p. 132)

Community violence undoubtedly contributed to the micro-culture of family violence, perhaps by altering perceptions of violence as acceptable. Findings from a

household survey ($n = 405$; ages 15–65) conducted in the city of Itagui, showed that one-third of participants had a family member with a past criminal record and almost half of the participants endorsed violence and corruption as socially acceptable behaviours (Duque & Klevens, 2001; Duque & Restrepo, 2012). Violence in Itagui, is, however not homogeneously distributed. Duque and Klevens (2000) also found that young males (i.e., 15–19 year olds) had a two-to-one ratio of being victimized relative to females of all ages, and that older males had a three-to-one ratio of having witnessed a violent act. Furthermore, Mejia, Kliewer, and Williams (2006) have also found direct and indirect mechanisms by which family violence and adolescent maltreatment are associated with increased risk of violent behaviour and impaired prosocial behaviour among 11- to 19-year-olds living in Medellin.

Although there is scarce scientific evidence linking cultural factors and family processes with violent behaviours and substance use among youth in Colombia, the PREVIVA study (Duque, Orduz, Sandoval, & Caicedo, 2007; Duque, Restrepo, & Montoya, 2011) provided preliminary information about these links and suggested guidelines for studying associations of cultural determinants of adolescents' future outcomes. Researchers identified several risk and protective factors for violence (e.g., aggression, armed robbery) in 10 municipalities in Antioquia, Colombia, including the city of Itagui. Protective factors included culturally informed monitoring of youth, mother's communication and monitoring of youth activities, participation in surveillance and violence control activities in the neighbourhood, and positive and proactive attitude towards law enforcement. Two of the most relevant risk factors were legitimization of violence as a coping mechanism to protect the family and desensitization to the armed conflict in the city.

13.4 Study Design and Methodology

The Itagui violence study used a mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative) approach. The study was implemented in three phases: (1) focus groups with youth (13–18 years) and adults (19–65 years); (2) a population-based household survey; and (3) a case control study aimed at identifying behavioural and structural factors associated with violence among a sample of juvenile delinquents. Six focus groups were carried out in order to gain a deeper understanding of the culture of violence in the community and its relation with resilient processes. The focus groups with adolescents included youth from each of the six *comunas*. Adolescents discussed their perception of violence in their community; whether alcohol/substance abuse influenced behavioural responses among them; their satisfaction with their neighbourhood; the type of opportunities available in their communities; and their recommendations to parents in order to help them avoid trouble. Using a community mapping approach, youth were also asked to identify the areas most affected by violence.

The survey phase used a population household design of non-institutionalized participants ages 13–65, residing in Itagui County. It calculated a representative

sample based on a census projection (DANE: Colombian Institute of Demography and Vital Statistics, 2012) of 189,882 people, a point prevalence of violence of 11.4 % for youth ($n = 310$), and a 15.5 % prevalence of violence victimization among adults ($n = 404$) (Maya et al., 2000).

Fieldwork was achieved through two steps. First, an initial visit to the "*comunas*" included in the sample allowed the field team to sensitize the community to the study and recruite participants. Household sensitization of research activities was conducted by asking prospective participants to provide verbal consent following a thorough explanation of study objectives and scope of work. Verbal consent has been shown to be appropriate in population studies in low-income *comunas* in Medellin (Posada-Villa et al., 2009). Data for the present chapter includes 395 youth and young adults (ages 13–30) recruited from the household survey.

The survey contained 26 scales, including community violence exposure, domestic violence, child maltreatment, family stressful life events, aggression, conduct disorder, acceptance of violence, irritability, impulsivity, peer problems, alcohol and tobacco use, other drug use, prosocial behaviour, satisfaction with life, self-esteem, self-efficacy, family cohesion, family network support, communication with parents, and perceptions of community institutions.[1] All scales displayed good internal consistency using exploratory factor analysis (Cronbach alpha's greater than .80; Torres et al., 2013).

13.4.1 Analytic Approach Used to Assess Resilience

Prior to conducting analyses, zero-order associations among constructs were computed. Analyses were then conducted in two phases. In the first phase, two approaches were employed. First, youth and young adults with high levels of violence exposure but contrasting adjustment profiles (good versus poor adjustment, or resilient versus non-resilient) were compared on levels and presence of protective processes using Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs). Then, moderator analyses using hierarchical regression were conducted with the full range of violence exposure and adjustment, with a focus on key protective processes identified in the first step. In the second phase, the six *comunas* were compared on risk factors (violence exposure, life stress), adjustment (aggression, substance use, prosocial behaviour, life satisfaction), and protective factors and processes using ANOVAs. Lastly, the importance of microcutural factors influencing violence and resilience was contextualized through data from focus groups which were analysed using a thematic approach.

[1] The exact names and details of these scales may be obtained from the corresponding author.

13.5 Key Findings: Exposure, Adjustment, and Protective Processes

13.5.1 The Context of Exposure

Youth and young adults living in Itagui reported significant lifetime (see Table 13.1) and past year violence exposure (see Table 13.2), as well as significant rates of life events (see Table 13.3). Not surprisingly, participants with higher lifetime violence exposure also witnessed and directly experienced more violence in the past year. Community violence, of course, does not occur in a vacuum. As seen in Table 13.3, economic stressors were present in a third of the sample. Qualitative data underscored

Table 13.1 Level of lifetime violence exposure

Type of violence witnessed	Percentage endorsing				Percentage ever experienced
	Never	Once	A few times	Many times	
Harassment	69.2	14.5	14.2	2.1	30.8
Serious threats	64.6	16.8	16.3	2.3	35.4
Theft	60.2	15.0	20.2	4.7	39.8
Shooting	80.9	7.8	9.6	1.8	19.1
Stabbing	73.1	14.2	11.1	1.6	26.9

Note. *N* ranges from 380 to 387 due to missing data

Table 13.2 Level of past year violence exposure

Type of violence	Percentage experienced
Participant was robbed at gunpoint	12.4
Robbery of another person was witnessed	17.7
A police officer or other public authority figure demanded money of the participant	4.1
Someone who was not a police officer or public authority figure demanded money of the participant	1.8
Participant was threatened with forcing to move, changing opinions, or remaining silent about knowledge	1.5
Participant was beaten	6.1
Participant was abused or hit by the police	3.0
Participant was wounded with a knife	0.5
Participant was wounded with a firearm	0
Participant witnessed someone else being hurt with a knife or gun	8.6
Participant's life or the life of a close relative was threatened	4.8
A close relative of the participant was kidnapped	0
A close relative of the participant was killed	3.8
A close relative of the participant committed suicide	1.8

Note. $N = 395$

Table 13.3 Level of past year family life events

Life event	Percentage experienced
Violence between family members	8.1
Family member died of violent causes	4.9
Children were mistreated	2.4
Fights between parents	5.6
Father abused mother	2.4
Money problems at home	29.9
Relocation to a worse neighbourhood due to economic problems	3.1
Father lost job	7.6
Family lacked food	5.1
Parents separated or divorced	7.0
Parents remarried or began a new relationship	7.0
One parent abandoned the family	6.3
A child ran away from home	3.1
Parents or children had legal problems	4.1
The family moved	3.3
A family member was treated for emotional problems	6.7
Alcoholism	8.7
Drug use problems	5.9

Note. N = 378–393 due to missing cases

the priority amongst participants of gaining power and money. It also highlighted the powerful positioning of "drug culture" with "lots of corruption" including law enforcement. According to participants, everyone in the community should respect the "invisible barriers" set by neighbourhood gangs, which prevent youth living in nearby "*comunas*" to freely play and do sports as they could be victimized.

13.5.2 Participant Behaviour

Over half of the sample reported being aggressive "sometimes," "most of the time," or "always." In terms of lifetime acts of aggression, nearly 10 % of the sample reported carrying a knife on the street, 12 % reported being in a fight, and nine percent reported stealing property (see Table 13.4). Reported levels of anger and irritation were lower, with most participants indicating they are "never" or "occasionally" angry. This suggests that in a culture of violence a particular negative affect does not have to be present to precede aggressive behaviour.

With regards to substance use, lifetime prevalence of alcohol consumption was higher than any other substance (see Table 13.5). One-fifth of the sample reported lifetime marijuana use, and nearly 10 % of the sample reported using drugs other than cigarettes, alcohol, or marijuana. During focus groups, participants discussed substance abuse as a coping strategy to stop thinking and to escape from their dysfunctional families. The lack of educational and job opportunities in their

Table 13.4 Lifetime acts of aggression

Type of aggression	Percentage reporting
Carried a knife on the street	9.6
Carried a gun on the street	2.0
Carried a knife or razor at school	4.9
Carried a gun at school	0.5
Been in a physical fight	11.9
Injured following a fight	4.6
Treated by a doctor for injuries in a fight	1.8
Threatened others	3.8
Speaks louder than peers	6.7
Damaged property	6.1
Stolen	8.9

Note. N = 371–395 due to missing cases

Table 13.5 Prevalence of substance use

	Percentage reporting		
Substance	Lifetime	Yearly	Monthly
Cigarettes	23.5	15.9	13.2
Alcohol	59.0	54.9	42.0
Marijuana	20	12.2	9.4
Other drugs	9.6	–	–

Note. N = 395

neighbourhoods were described by participants as the main contributors to gang activity, homicides, and drug use. As in many cultures, self-medication – regulating negative feelings and sense of hopelessness that often co-occur with a culture of violence – through use of alcohol and other drugs was not uncommon (Bolton, Robinson, & Sareen, 2009).

In contrast to results pertaining to violence and substance use, more than half of the participants indicated that they "always" engaged in prosocial behaviour (see Table 13.6). Similarly, life satisfaction was very high, with over 90 % of respondents indicating they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their family and over 80 % indicating that they were satisfied or very satisfied with themselves, their friends, school, religion, and work. However 34 % were least satisfied with their family's economic situation. In focus groups adolescents stated that while parents should set rules and discipline at home they should also give youth freedom.

13.5.3 Social Costs Associated with a Microculture of Violence

Correlational analyses were conducted to document the social costs associated with violence exposure and life stress among youth and young adults in Itagui (see

Table 13.6 Percentage of participants reporting always engaging in prosocial acts

Prosocial behaviour	Percentage reporting
Stopping fights	17.5
Collecting and sorting objects in disarray without being asked	37.5
Helping people out when they need it	58.4
Appreciating the work of others less capable	64.9
Showing sympathy when others make mistakes	56.7
Helping others when they have difficulty performing a task	62.0
Helping people who are sick	64.7
Comforting people who are crying	55.4
Voluntarily cleaning up messes others have made	36.4

Note. N = 387−395 due to missing cases

Table 13.7 Associations between violence, life events, and adjustment

Adjustment	Lifetime violence exposure	Total family life events	Violent family life events	Financial family life events
Life satisfaction	−.18***	−.15**	−.11*	−.16**
Prosocial behaviour	−.17***	−.08	−.09	−.08
Acceptance of violence	.23***	.28***	.23***	.17**
Aggression (factor score)	.33***	.19***	.14**	.20***
Cigarette use – lifetime	.30***	.18***	.10*	.15**
Cigarette use – past year	.27***	.16***	.10*	.12*
Cigarette use – past month	.30***	.17***	.12*	.12*
Alcohol use – lifetime	.25***	.12*	.09	.13*
Alcohol use – past year	.24***	.12*	.09	.11*
Alcohol use – past month	.22***	.09	.07	.10
Marijuana use – lifetime	.31***	.20***	.14**	.15**
Marijuana use – past year	.29***	.25***	.18***	.17***
Marijuana use – past month	.27***	.25***	.19***	.18***
Other drug use – lifetime	.36***	.16**	.15**	.10

Note. *N*s range from 381 to 395 due to missing data
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 13.7). Higher levels of exposure to violence were associated with lower levels of life satisfaction and prosocial behaviour, and higher levels of acceptance of violence as normative, aggression, and substance use. Most of the correlations were in the moderate range, indicating the likelihood of factors that moderate the association between violence and adjustment, with some individuals showing attenuated responses to violence and others showing amplified responses to violence. Associations between life events and adjustment were less robust, but showed a similar pattern. Importantly, associations between lifetime violence exposure and adjustment remained significant, although slightly attenuated, when family life events were controlled in the analyses.

13.5.4 Culturally-Salient Differences in Protective Factors and Processes Among Resilient and Non-resilient Youth and Young Adults

The household survey assessed several factors and processes that could provide protection against exposure to violence and the factors that co-vary with exposure. These included religious attendance; perceptions of security; family cohesion, family activity, and support; and neighbourhood cohesion, all of which align with traditional Colombian culture. Youth and young adults with high levels of violence exposure but differing levels of adjustment were compared on protective factors and processes. As noted by Masten and Wright (2010), "resilience is a broad concept that generally refers to positive adaptation in any kind of dynamic system that comes under challenge or threat" (p. 215). Given the context, we focused on low levels of aggression and abstinence from substance use as indicators of positive outcomes facilitated through resilience processes. Our results varied slightly depending on the outcome, which is not unusual. Overall, however, religious attendance, perceived security, family activity, and family cohesion emerged as differentiating youth and young adults who had high resilience processes available to them and those who did not. Individuals who reported high levels of resilience processes attended religious services more regularly, felt more secure, and lived in families with higher levels of interaction and cohesion between members. Religiosity (Londoño-Vega, 2002) and family cohesion (Hanratty & Meditz, 1988) are imbedded in the Colombian culture, highlighting the importance of cultural processes as contributing to resilience.

13.5.5 Interactions Among Violence Exposure and Culturally-Salient Protective Processes Predicting Adjustment

As a complement to the above analyses, a series of hierarchical and binary logistic regression models were run examining the contributions of lifetime violence exposure, culturally embedded protective factors, and their interaction to adjustment. In models predicting aggression, there were significant Violence Exposure × Religious Attendance, Violence Exposure × Family Cohesion, and Violence Exposure × Perceived Security interactions (see Table 13.8). In each case the relation between exposure to violence and aggression was stronger for lower levels of the protective factor. That is, youth and young adults who attended religious services more regularly, reported more feelings of security, and described their families as being more cohesive, were less likely to report behaving aggressively in the context of high community violence relative to youth who attended religious services infrequently, felt less secure, and resided in less cohesive homes. Further, religious attendance, family cohesion, and perceived security each had strong negative associations with aggressive behaviour, indicating that these factors were beneficial even in the absence of violence exposure. In models predicting drug use similar patterns were found, although these findings were of particular relevance to alcohol and marijuana use.

Table 13.8 Hierarchical regression analyses predicting youth aggression from violence exposure, protective factors, and their interaction

	B	SE *B*	b
Model 1			
Violence exposure	.26	.05	.38***
Religious attendance	−.54	.24	−.12*
Violence × Religious attendance	−.13	.07	−.12*
$R^2 = .12$. $F(3, 340) = 15.15$, $p < .001$.			
Model 2			
Violence exposure	.21	.04	.28***
Cohesion	−.07	.03	−.14**
Violence × Cohesion	−.01	.01	−.10*
$R^2 = .14$. $F(3, 380) = 20.49$, $p < .001$.			
Model 3			
Violence exposure	.19	.04	.26***
Perceived security	−.17	.04	−.21***
Violence × Security	−.02	.01	−.10*
$R^2 = .16$. $F(3, 379) = 24.30$, $p < .001$.			

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

Fig. 13.1 The divisions of Itagui (Source: Municipio de Itagui, Wikimedia.org)

13.6 Key Findings: Neighbourhood Cultural Factors Associated with Resilience

A feature of the current study was that data were collected from six *comunas* each with a distinct "character." Figure 13.1 illustrates the political divisions of Itagui, including the *comunas* included in the study. In order to understand the contributions of neighbourhood cultural context to risk and resilience, participants residing in the six *comunas* were compared on risk factors, adjustment, and protective factors and processes using ANOVAs.

13.6.1 Neighbourhood Cultural Differences on Risk Factors

There were significant overall differences across the *comunas* on lifetime violence exposure, total number of family life events in the past year, and number of violent family life events in the past year. Post-hoc analyses clearly revealed that *comuna* 6 in particular was consistently different from the other *comunas* in terms of exposure to violence and general family stress. However, the *comunas* did not differ on economic strain (see Table 13.9).

Table 13.9 Differences across comunas on risk factors and adjustment outcomes

	Comuna					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Variable	($n = 62$–64)	($n = 76$)	($n = 66$–68)	($n = 61$)	($n = 61$)	($n = 61$–65)
Lifetime						
Violence	1.58[a]	2.74[b]	2.39	2.93[b]	1.95[a]	3.30[b]
Exposure	(2.67)	(3.62)	(3.38)	(3.01)	(3.17)	(3.84)
Past year	0.59[a]	1.08[a]	1.26[a]	1.15[a]	0.79[a]	2.23[b]
Life events	(0.99)	(1.57)	(1.75)	(2.34)	(1.38)	(5.45)
Violent						
Life events	0.13[a]	0.12[a]	0.16[a]	0.15[a]	0.10[a]	0.43[b]
(Past year)	(0.38)	(0.40)	(0.51)	(0.44)	(0.44)	(1.25)
Economic						
Life events	0.31	0.53	0.50	0.43	0.33	0.57
(Past year)	(0.56)	(0.64)	(0.76)	(0.69)	(0.63)	(1.26)
Acceptance of violence	14.30[a]	14.01[a]	13.93[a]	13.71[a]	15.73[c]	21.67[b]
	(4.99)	(4.25)	(4.13)	(4.85)	(5.19)	(7.76)
Aggression	0.18	0.05	−.05	−.02	−.55[a]	.37[b]
	(2.27)	(2.46)	(2.32)	(2.83)	(2.21)	(2.46)
Life satisfaction	34.82[a]	34.60[a]	31.99[b]	34.73[c]	31.97[d]	29.71[e]
	(4.49)	(4.97)	(6.71)	(6.48)	(3.92)	(4.62)
Prosocial behaviour	23.16[a]	21.52[b]	22.14[a]	21.07[c]	19.91[c]	20.38[c]
	(3.28)	(4.03)	(3.34)	(3.89)	(3.23)	(4.04)
Marijuana						
Lifetime	13 %[a]	22 %	16 %[a]	21 %	15 %[a]	32 %[b]
Past year	9 %[a]	14 %	6 %[a]	11 %[a]	8 %[a]	23 %[b]
Past month	6 %[a]	12 %	6 %[a]	7 %[a]	5 %[a]	20 %[b]

Note. Superscripts that differ from one another indicate significant group differences. For example, a mean with a superscript a is significantly different from a mean with a superscript b. Standard deviations are in parentheses

The above analyses were repeated for adjustment outcomes. Again, there were significant overall differences on acceptance of violence as normative, aggression, life satisfaction, and prosocial behaviour, as well as on use of marijuana in the past month, year, and lifetime (see Table 13.9). However, there were no overall differences on cigarette use, alcohol use, or use of other drugs (not shown in table). In all cases, residents of *comuna* 6 fared worse: they were more accepting of violence, more aggressive, less prosocial, less satisfied with their lives and more likely to use marijuana.

Next we examined the pattern of protective factors across the *comunas*. Aside from perceived security, where the pattern was anomalous, *comunas* 5 and 6 scored consistently lower on protective factors than the other four *comunas* (see Table 13.10). According to the Census (DANE, 2012), *comuna* 6 is the least populated area compared with other *comunas* in the city (e.g., 15,392 vs. 58,927

Table 13.10 Differences across comunas on protective factors

	Comuna					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Variable	($n = 62$–64)	($n = 76$)	($n = 66$–68)	($n = 61$)	($n = 61$)	($n = 61$–65)
Perceived security	15.50[a]	14.33[b]	15.17	14.79	15.54[a]	15.36[a]
	(3.00)	(3.16)	(2.69)	(3.29)	(2.35)	(2.68)
Family cohesion	23.85[a]	23.19[a]	24.30[a]	24.30[a]	20.84[b]	20.11[b]
	(4.29)	(4.33)	(4.30)	(4.26)	(4.31)	(5.02)
Support	21.54[a]	20.35	21.18[a]	20.77	18.72[b]	19.64
	(5.49)	(6.55)	(5.48)	(6.29)	(5.28)	(5.20)
Family activity	17.98[a]	18.85[a]	18.67[a]	19.13[a]	13.99[b]	16.51[c]
	(4.68)	(4.51)	(4.33)	(4.08)	(4.75)	(4.27)
Neigh. cohesion	27.25[a]	28.44[a]	27.00[a]	28.24[a]	25.08[b]	23.36[b]
	(4.45)	(3.52)	(3.65)	(3.35)	(3.93)	(4.32)
High religious attendance	53 %	52 %	56 %	49 %	46 %	41 %

Note. Superscripts that differ from one another indicate significant group differences. For example, a mean with a superscript a is significantly different from a mean with a superscript b. Standard deviations are in parentheses. There were no overall group differences in religious attendance or perceived security; the overall group difference for support was marginal

inhabitants living in *comuna* 4), has the least number of churches (2 vs. 5 in *comuna* 1), only two sports facilities compared with 20 located in *comunas* 3 and 4, and no primary health care facilities (Municipio de Itagui, 2013). Although the sample was drawn from Itagui, cultural differences exist within the neighbourhoods embedded in the city. Clearly, some neighbourhoods have an infrastructure and microculture that supports a culture of prosocial engagement, religious involvement, and health, while others do not. Some neighbourhoods have a pattern of violence and drug activity that engenders fear and distrust of neighbours while others – often only blocks away – do not. Thus, understanding these microcultural environments is important as we begin to grasp the ways in which culture makes resilience possible, or not.

Conclusion

In summary, although embedded in a culture of violence and drug use, some youth and young adults in Itagui demonstrated positive adaptation. The cultural context that encouraged faith and religious commitment and promoted family cohesion and connectedness enabled youth to rise above their circumstances. Although these data shed some light on how the cultural context in specific *comunas* in Itagui can promote resilience, more information is needed to understand how culture affects family life, which in turn affects youth resilience.

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Part III
Researching Resilience Across Cultures

Chapter 14
The Value of Keeping an Open Eye for Methodological Issues in Research on Resilience and Culture

Jia He and Fons J.R. Van de Vijver

Resilience, which refers to the recovery and sustained pursuit of the positive for individuals and communities despite adversity (e.g., Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013), has both culture universal and specific aspects (Ungar, 2008). We propose to keep an open eye for the methodological consideration in researching resilience and culture. We argue that qualitative and quantitative approaches to researching resilience can be adequately combined in cross-cultural studies (Van de Vijver & Chasiotis, 2010). The argument is based on two related considerations. Firstly, resilience research often takes place in field conditions in which the methodological rigor of laboratory research is hard to obtain. As a consequence, we need to have flexible tools in cross-cultural resilience research. Secondly, qualitative and quantitative methods can yield complementary insights (Denzin, 2006).

It is a strength of qualitative research that reality is studied with a very open mind, thereby providing much more opportunity for focusing on culture-specific aspects than can typically be achieved in quantitative studies. Qualitative methods have proven beneficial in improving the ecological validity of resilience studies within specific cultural contexts (e.g., Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). Interviews, focus groups, and observations, sometimes combined with other innovative methods, such as quadrant mapping and structured interview matrix, have been used to enrich qualitative studies (Ebersöhn, 2010; Moscardino, Axia, Scrimin, & Capello, 2007). The primary advantage of such approaches lies in the richness of the ethnographic portrayal of resilience in different contexts. For example, the

J. He
Department of Culture Studies, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

F.J.R. Van de Vijver (✉)
Department of Culture Studies, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

Department of Psychology, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa

Department of Psychology, University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
e-mail: Fons.vandeVijver@uvt.nl

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Negotiating Resilience Project team has identified both cultural universals and specifics of resilient adolescents in various cultures with a new qualitative visual method, in which adolescents were interviewed and videotaped during a day, and they reflected on their own experience and environment through photo elicitation (e.g., Cameron, Lau, & Tapanya, 2009; Liebenberg, Didkowsky, & Ungar, 2012). However, qualitative resilience studies are not without limitations. In particular, very few qualitative studies explicitly addressed the issue of equivalence and most had very small sample sizes. As argued below, quantitative studies are particularly useful in dealing with equivalence issues; various procedures have been developed to test whether quantitative data obtained in different cultures have the same psychological meaning. It can be concluded that the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other. Therefore, it is easy to see that the combined use of both methods is fruitful, especially if the methods are integrated with an open eye for their strengths and weaknesses. We adopt a pragmatic approach to the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods. It may be noted that this pragmatism is in line with the current interest in mixed methods (Van de Vijver & Chasiotis, 2010).

Drawing on a framework of bias and equivalence from quantitative cross-cultural methods, we first review construct, method, and item bias arising in resilience research involving multiple cultures, and the corresponding levels of equivalence in cross-cultural comparisons. We start with a description of approaches developed in quantitative studies, followed by a description of how these apply to qualitative studies (providing examples throughout). We then turn to one of the key issues in mixed methods namely how to combine qualitative and quantitative evidence. Finally, we draw conclusions.

14.1 Bias and Equivalence in Cross-Cultural Resilience Research

Bias is defined as the presence of systematic errors that are expected to be found again were the study to be repeated. It includes various artifacts that threaten the validity of measures administered in different cultures (He & Van de Vijver, 2012). As a corresponding term, equivalence is defined as the level of comparability of scores across cultures. The primary goal in cross-cultural comparison is often to reduce bias and achieve equivalence, even though bias in itself can point to important cross-cultural differences (Poortinga & Van der Flier, 1988). The existence of bias implies that differences in observed scores may not correspond to genuine differences in the underlying trait or ability being targeted. If not taken into account, bias can be misinterpreted as substantive cross-cultural differences. Based on the source of invalidity, three types of bias, namely construct, method, and item bias, can be distinguished (Van de Vijver & Tanzer, 2004). A summary of the types of bias, the sources, and strategies to deal with bias is presented in Table 14.1.

Table 14.1 Overview of bias, the sources, and strategies to deal with bias

Type of bias	(a) Sources of bias
Construct bias	1. Partial non-overlap of the construct
	2. Differential behaviors associated with the construct
	3. Poor sampling of relevant behaviors
Method bias	1. Incomparability of samples
	2. Differential familiarity with stimuli (cognitive tests)
	3. Differential response styles
	4. Differential response procedures
	5. Tester/interview/observer effects
Item bias	1. Poor item translation
	2. Ambiguous items
	3. Items that involve additional traits or abilities
	4. Cultural specifics
	(b) Strategies to deal with bias
Construct bias	1. Use of cultural informants
	2. Use of local surveys
	3. Partnering with the community
	4. Exploratory factor analysis[a]
	5. Confirmatory factor analysis[a]
Method bias	1. Matching sample characteristics
	2. Statistical control of the effects of sample characteristics[a]
	3. Inclusion of measures of response styles
	4. Standardized administration conditions
	5. Avoidance of researcher obtrusiveness
Item bias	1. Linguistic and psychological (judgmental) analysis of items
	2. Differential Item Functioning analysis[a]

[a]Only applicable in quantitative studies

14.1.1 Construct Bias

Construct bias occurs when the construct measured is not identical across cultures. It can happen when there is only partial overlap in the definition of the construct across cultures or there are differences in behaviors relevant to the construct (Van de Vijver & Poortinga, 1997). The assessment of resilience, a multifaceted construct referring to a variety of traits, protective processes, and outcomes of individuals and communities under risk (Zautra, Hall, & Murray, 2010), is vulnerable to construct bias. To begin with, cultures differ in their implicit views on resilience. East Asians tend to view resilience as the full awareness and acceptance of experience, whereas Westerners tend to interpret it as self-choice and mastery over environment (Zautra et al., 2010). Similarly, certain behaviors considered risk factors that hamper resilience in one culture may have a positive connotation in another culture (e.g., Ungar, 2001). For instance, drop-out is regarded a negative school outcome in most cultures, yet it has been found that a group of African

Canadian students resorted to drop-out to demonstrate dignity, personal efficacy, and independence (Dei, Mazzuca, McIsaac, & Zine, 1997). It is important to take culture-specific aspects of resilience into consideration and acknowledge the incompleteness of the overlap of the construct in studies involving very dissimilar cultures (Ungar, 2010).

14.1.1.1 Construct Bias in Quantitative Studies

Both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) can be used to establish construct (in)equivalence in cross-cultural data, whereas CFA is also capable of detecting item bias. EFA is preferred when the underlying structure is unclear, such as is often the case in measures of resilience (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). The principle of using EFA (and various other dimensionality-reducing techniques) to study equivalence is simple: identity of factors (or dimensions) of an instrument to assess resilience across cultures is taken as sufficient evidence for equivalence, which points to the similarity of resilience across the cultures studied. Target rotations can be carried out to compare the structure across cultures and to evaluate factor congruence, often by means of the computation of Tucker's phi coefficient, which tests to what extent factors are identical across cultures. Values of the coefficient above .90 are usually considered to be adequate and above .95 to be excellent (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997).

CFA is usually applied when the structure of the construct can be derived from theory or previous work. A good fit of a CFA model indicates that the hypothesized factor structure can be accepted, and provides sufficient evidence for equivalence. CFA can test hierarchical models in which cross-cultural invariance is examined for a systematically increasing or decreasing number of parameters. The combination of a high level of detail and statistical rigor makes these analyses state-of-the-art in quantitative equivalence assessment. For example, Paton, Bajek, Okada, and McIvor (2010) studied earthquake preparedness in Japan and New Zealand; they used this method to test the cross-cultural invariance of the relationship between hazard beliefs, social characteristics, and their interaction to predict earthquake preparedness in the two cultures.

A number of resilience scales (e.g., the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, the Ego-Resilient Scale, and the Resilience Scale for Adults) have been reviewed for their psychometric properties in quantitative designs, yet no "gold standard" has been identified (Windle, Bennett, & Noyes, 2011). Moreover, some instruments may represent different factor structures in different cultures, causing construct bias. For example, a five-factor solution of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale was found in a group of Chinese (Yu & Zhang, 2007), whereas a four-factor solution was found among community-dwelling older women in the US (Lamond et al., 2008). In addition, many of these measures did not take cultural influence into consideration. The Cultural Resilience Measure (Clauss-Ehlers, 2008) and the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2009), which explicitly

factor cultural elements in, are perhaps among the best efforts to develop more ecologically valid measures of resilience.

14.1.1.2 Construct Bias in Qualitative Studies

A qualitative method is slightly more flexible in dealing with construct bias compared with quantitative methods. Instead of assuming that a measure of resilience has validity in a cultural group and then testing this assertion in quantitative designs, qualitative studies can go one step back and start from interviews with locals to identify what is meant with resilience, or which behaviors and attitudes are associated with it. There are numerous examples of these ethnographic explorations, such as a study of depression in Zimbabwe (Patel, Abas, Broadhead, Todd, & Reeler, 2001). In qualitative designs of resilience and culture research, the working definition of resilience may be negotiated from the conjoint work of scientists and community partners at site (Abdou et al., 2010), which helps to clarify the scope of the construct and to facilitate the interpretation of results, thereby reducing the likelihood of bias.

14.1.2 Method Bias

Method bias is a generic term for bias deriving from sampling, structural features of the instrument, or administration processes. As the concept has been developed within the context of quantitative studies, we present the definitions within the framework of such studies, although as argued below the concept is also relevant in qualitative studies.

14.1.2.1 Method Bias in Quantitative Studies

Sample bias results from the difference in sample characteristics (e.g., age, gender, education, religious belief) that has a bearing on observed score differences. Respondents' religious beliefs may affect how they perceive and practice resilience (Pargament & Cummings, 2010), thus the comparison of resilience of atheists with religious people may be susceptible to sample bias. It is important to match or statistically control for the effects of certain sample characteristics when multiple cultures are involved (He & Van de Vijver, 2012).

Instrument bias refers to nuisance factors arising from instrument characteristics. The sources of instrument bias include response styles (in personality and attitude inventories) and stimulus familiarity (in cognitive and educational tests) (He & Van de Vijver, 2012). In measuring positive psychological constructs including resilience, Likert-type scales may induce high levels of response styles, such as acquiescence, which is the tendency to always agree regardless of content.

Friborg, Martinussen, and Rosenvinge (2006) compared the Likert-based response formats with a semantic differential response format in a resilience measure and found that the latter could effectively reduce acquiescence without jeopardizing the psychometric quality.

Administration bias occurs when different administration conditions are applied (e.g., paper-based versus computer-based administration, individual versus group administration), unclear instructions, and communication between test administrator and respondents (e.g., language differences, taboo topics). It is important to match the administration conditions in different cultures. In interviewing participants of different cultures, local experts and assistants who have the same mother tongue may be preferred (e.g., Bottery, Ngai, Wong, & Wong, 2008).

14.1.2.2 Method Bias in Qualitative Studies

The issue of using small and possibly biased *samples* can also jeopardize cross-cultural resilience studies, notably if target participants are hard to reach and the control of the methods is poor. To avoid or accommodate sample bias, different strategies to recruit participants can be used. Given the time and cost constraints, small samples are often unavoidable. Bottery et al. (2008) compared resilience of a school principal in UK and a school principal in Hong Kong. They described both contextual differences and challenges faced by the principals and similarity in underlying themes, such as the desire to improve the children's lot and not to give in to constraints and pressures they daily face. Efforts can also be made to reach random samples and enhance generalizability. For example, Eggerman and Panter-Brick (2010) studied resilience among Afghani through semi-structured interviews with a systematic random sample of over 2,000 participants. With matched gender and geographic representation in the sample, the study provided rich information on how contexts framed individual and collective experiences of resilience.

Another potential method bias threat is the *obtrusiveness of the presence of the researcher*. Quantitative studies can employ some procedures to reduce this obtrusiveness, mainly by standardizing administrations (thereby ensuring that identical questions are being asked) and using local test assistants. However, the analysis of qualitative data can easily become very interpretive or subjective. Researcher's obtrusiveness is difficult to avoid. In some cases it may be possible to develop a coding scheme by a multicultural research team involved in every stage of a qualitative study to examine interrater reliability. An adequate reliability check (i.e., usually with an interrater agreement above 85 %) is important in demonstrating that categories are used in the same way by different raters (Abdou et al., 2010). If necessary, third parties (e.g., local experts) and interviewees can be invited to scrutinize the interpretation of qualitative data; a second interview can be arranged if there are points to be clarified or extended (Bottery et al., 2008). Finally, administration problems could also challenge qualitative data collection; examples are language problems in working with interpreters or having interviews overheard

by locals or household members if a quiet place for conducting the interview is not available.

14.1.3 Item Bias

Item bias, also known as differential item functioning (DIF), indicates that an item has a different psychological meaning across cultures. The background of item bias can be both linguistic (e.g., poor translation) and cultural (e.g., inapplicability of item contents in different cultures or items with cross-culturally different connotations). Item bias may not be easy to accommodate in international tests or surveys, especially when heterogeneous samples are involved; therefore, it is important to detect and find explanations for the bias (e.g., item focus, context, and formats) (Leung & Van de Vijver, 2008).

14.1.3.1 Item Bias in Quantitative Studies

In the quantitative tradition, an item is taken to be biased if persons with the same trait or ability, but coming from different cultures, are not equally likely to endorse the item (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). In other words, DIF refers to the problems caused by the differing probabilities of correctly solving or endorsing an item after matching on the underlying ability that the item is intended to measure in different cultures (Zumbo, 2007). For example, Pan, Wong, Chan, and Joubert (2008) had to exclude items regarding religion as a protective factor when studying resilience among Chinese students, because these items were much less meaningful for this group compared with respondents from cultures that place importance on religiosity. Numerous sophisticated statistical procedures are available to detect item bias (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997; Zumbo, 2007).

14.1.3.2 Item Bias in Qualitative Studies

In qualitative studies item bias is hardly ever systematically addressed. It is more likely that if an item would be poorly translated or would be not applicable in a specific cultural context, the problem would be picked up during a pilot or the main data collection. Yet, item bias could occur in qualitative studies and more systematic attention for the quality of separate items may enhance the quality of cross-cultural resilience studies.

14.1.4 Equivalence

14.1.4.1 Equivalence in Quantitative Studies

Equivalence refers to the measurement level at which scores obtained in different cultures can be compared. Dealing with the three types of bias presented above has important implications for cross-cultural equivalence. Van de Vijver and Leung (1997) distinguished three hierarchically nested equivalences, namely construct equivalence, measurement unit (or metric) equivalence, and full score (or scalar) equivalence.

Construct equivalence, the basis for any cross-cultural comparison, means that the same theoretical construct is measured across all cultures studied. Construct equivalence should be empirically demonstrated through confirming the identity of the structure of the construct and the adequacy of sampled items (Van de Vijver & Poortinga, 1997). It can be challenging to realize construct equivalence for locally developed measures of concepts. This is especially the case for resilience. Theron, Theron, and Malindi (2013) argued that resilience should not be uniformly conceptualized across contexts, and they defined resilience according to the valuing of collectivist philosophies in the African context. When a construct does not have the same meaning across the cultures, researchers need to acknowledge the incompleteness of conceptualization and compare the equivalent subfacets (i.e., partial invariance). *Metric equivalence* indicates that measures of interval or ratio level have the same measurement unit across cultural contexts, but they have different origins. When measures show metric equivalence, scores can be compared within cultural groups (e.g., male and female differences can be tested in each group), but scores cannot be compared directly across groups. *Scalar equivalence* states that scales have the same measurement unit and origin. It means that there is no bias and data can be compared directly within and across cultures. When measures show full score equivalence, analyses of variance and *t* tests to examine cross-cultural differences in means are appropriate for (and only for) this level of equivalence.

14.1.4.2 Equivalence in Qualitative Studies

Equivalence is a concept that has been developed in quantitative studies. In our view, the primary concern in qualitative studies is construct equivalence. Measurement and scalar invariance are hardly ever pursued in qualitative studies. We refer to the previous section for an overview of how construct bias can be dealt with in qualitative studies.

14.2 Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Evidence

The largest methodological bottleneck in the use of mixed methods in resilience research is the question of how qualitative and quantitative evidence can be combined. What are the criteria to identify when evidence from multiple sources is diverging (contradictory), converging (reinforcing), or has no relationship? Triangulation is the key concept that can be used here, which essentially amounts to combining information from (usually) quantitative and qualitative methods. Conceptually further away from positivism, the concept of crystallization has been introduced by Richardson (2000). The idea behind crystallization is that there are multiple realities with infinite variety of shape, substance, transmutations, and angles of approach. Crystallization is an emergent framework to integrate multiple forms of analysis and genres of representation; it starts from the assumption that knowledge is situated, partial, constructed, multiple, embodied, and enmeshed in power relations (Ellingson, 2009). However, not much has been done on crystallization in qualitative research, thus further exploration and articulation of the concept as a workable technique is still to be established (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

Denzin (2006) distinguishes four types of triangulation, depending on what is combined: data (e.g., multiple questionnaires of resilience), investigators/informants (e.g., multiple observers), theories (e.g., multiple theoretical frameworks to explain resilience), or methods (e.g., multiple methods such as interviews and questionnaires). As an example of triangulation of investigators/informants, Hurd (2004) was interested in normal grief processes of a female adolescent after losing her father. He interviewed her brother and mother to establish the validity of his data. The combination of two or more methods is the most common form of triangulation in resilience research. For example, Metzl (2009) combined qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the use of creativity in coping by survivors of hurricane Katrina. Camfield, Guillen-Royo, and Velazco (2010) examined whether objective need deprivation predicts subjective and psychological wellbeing in Bangladesh and Thailand. They used follow-up interviews to better understand the quantitative cross-cultural differences.

Notably when the information deals with overlapping issues, such as competing theories or qualitative and quantitative data about the same phenomenon, it can be useful to formalize the process of comparison. From a methodological perspective, these comparisons can be of three types: a quantitative—quantitative comparison, a qualitative—qualitative comparison, and a quantitative—qualitative comparison. Even if the original data are both qualitative and quantitative, it may well be possible to convert one type of information so that the final comparison to be made is within a single method (qualitative or quantitative). A conversion could resolve the problem that there are no formalized procedures to compare qualitative and quantitative evidence. Using content analysis (Krippendorff, 2012), qualitative information may be converted to numerical scores. Data from different quantitative sources that address the same issue can then be combined in so-called multimethod

matrices (Campbell & Fiske, 1959), which can be analyzed using structural equation modeling (MacCallum & Austin, 2000).

If all data are converted to the qualitative domain, a similar approach can be adopted; yet, the earlier observed lack of formalized test procedures in qualitative studies may create problems. Through the analysis of protocols it may still be possible to compare different perspectives and to evaluate to what extent different informants or experts yield converging and diverging information. Furthermore, the credibility and accuracy of sources can be evaluated by checking the quality of different sources of information.

Combining qualitative and quantitative information on the same topic can be troublesome if the two types of evidence yield incompatible conclusions and there is no clear rationale for favoring one source over the other. The problem can also occur within a single method. Suppose that two informants provide incompatible information as to the nature of resilience in a particular group. If the stalemate cannot be broken by additional evidence (e.g., one informant also provided unreliable information on another topic), there may not be much left than pointing out that the information is incompatible. In such a case, crystallization may be a more adequate method to pursue. Only if there is a clear convergence of information of qualitative and quantitative information, the two sources strengthen each other, which greatly add to the validity of the findings.

It can be concluded that combining information from multiple sources is often easiest when it involves quantitative (or quantified) data, as statistical procedures exist for combining these resources. However, in many cases data cannot be quantified or quantification defies the study purpose. In those cases a natural follow-up would be to assess the accuracy and alignment of qualitative information coming from different sources. These quality assessments may guide the decision as to the integration of qualitative information from multiple sources. However, if data from multiple sources are divergent and no convincing circumstantial evidence is available to substantiate a particular interpretation, it may be impossible to show the validity of conclusions.

Conclusion

Built on the extensive knowledge from cross-cultural research accumulated in the last few decades, we reviewed in this chapter the framework of bias and equivalence from quantitative methods and extended the application to qualitative and mixed methods. We argued that resilience research would gain from a further integration of qualitative and quantitative methods (e.g., Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). Given the broad scope of research from resilience and culture, and the important implications merited, it is hoped that an open eye for methodological aspects of resilience studies can contribute to a more culture-informative understanding of resilience.

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Chapter 15
Innovative Qualitative Explorations of Culture and Resilience

Linda Liebenberg and Linda C. Theron

To fully understand how culture and resilience are intertwined, the use of innovative qualitative research methods by researchers is imperative, irrespective of whether a study is a stand-alone exploration using only qualitative methods, or a mixed methods design. However, more important is astute and careful consideration in the choice and use of innovative methods. A vast literature discusses the use of creative, participatory methods when exploring complex phenomena, including how culture sculpts resilience processes. Although many authors advocate the use of novel, interactive methods in studies of marginalized youth, they seldom flag the importance of considering the cultural and contextual appropriateness of methodological choices, or how methodological choices advance understandings of the sophistication of pathways to resilience. Consequently, in this chapter we do not describe these many qualitative approaches. Rather, we aim to sensitize prospective users of inventive methods to think critically about their choices, given the multifaceted dynamics of youth development and resilience processes, together with the cultural and contextual characteristics of research sites. We achieve this by flagging how complex the research of youth resilience processes is, and how cultural and contextual variation amplifies such complexity. We then consider the limitations of existing discussions of innovative methods, posing new areas for consideration.

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L. Liebenberg (✉)
Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada
e-mail: Linda.Liebenberg@Dal.Ca

L.C. Theron
Optentia Research Focus Area, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa
e-mail: Linda.theron@nwu.ac.za

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Thereafter we present two exemplars from the Pathways to Resilience Research project to foreground the criticality of choosing culturally congruent, innovative methodologies. This international and mixed methods study of resilience processes amongst vulnerable youth from culturally diverse contexts presents an opportunity to reflect on the significance of locally apposite approaches to richer understanding of resilience processes in diverse cultures.

15.1 Studying Resilience in Diverse Cultural Contexts

Resilience as an emerging field of theory and practice has been characterized by a disparate research focus coupled with equally disparate understandings of the phenomenon (Glantz & Sloboda, 1999; Lerner, 2006; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). The concept of resilience has often been critiqued as a westernized (Boyden & Mann, 2005; Ungar, 2011) and ambiguous construct (Luthar et al., 2000) holding little relevance across cultures and contexts. Such critique has resulted in an increase of resilience research focused on marginalized youth spanning a multitude of contexts and cultures (see for example, Anderson, 2008; Betancourt & Kahn, 2008; Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2010; Nguyen-Gillham, Giacaman, Naser, & Boyce, 2008; Theron & Donald, 2013; Ungar, 2005; Ungar et al., 2007).

While these studies have broadened understanding of the variation in what resilience looks like researchers are still criticized for not clarifying the *why* of resilience processes (Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013), not employing culturally suitable measures of resilience (Masten, 2011), and of not foregrounding the voices of children and youth in their investigations (Liebenberg & Ungar, 2009). As Panter-Brick and Leckman (2013) argue, "We may have an intuitive grasp of what resilience means, but fall short of measuring it comprehensively and meaningfully …. If we are to take seriously the notion that resilience pathways are complex and context-specific, then we need to appraise the normative, as well as the functional, dimensions of adaptation, health, and wellbeing" (p. 333).

Lack of meaningful interrogation of research methods and superficial understandings of resilience go hand-in-hand, resulting in a cyclical process, where misaligned research designs – relating to operationalization, sampling, and choice of methods – are paired with limited understandings of this complex process. Failing to understand that resilience is much more than simply positive outcomes or development means that researchers often fall short of integrating key components related to the construct in their research designs, such as contexts of nonnormative adversity and cultural heterogeneity. Findings drawn from samples that omit contexts of nonnormative stress, or the varied and often ambivalent influences of culture, further entrench simplistic understandings of the concept, ignore the multifaceted components of "resilience" and negate its relevance to diverse populations confronted by adversity. By contrast, when researchers are circumspect in their choice of methods, they account for the heterogeneity that exists in terms of risk and adaptive systems; and understand that this is nuanced by

diversity in participants, contexts, and cultures; as well as the complexity created by the interaction of all three.

The heterogeneity amongst children and youth as research participants has been commented on extensively. For nearly five decades numerous authors have argued that the notion of "childhood" is embedded in historical, social, and cultural frameworks (Cosaro, 1997; Ennew, 1994; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Levine, Levine, & Leiderman, 1994). Infusing this understanding of children and youth with a constructivist theoretical lens, encourages researchers to acknowledge and account for the impact of aspects such as individual make-up (including developmental stage, sex, personality, personal attributes, genetic makeup, and so forth), and context (including but not limited to family structure, socio-economic background, educational resources, community, broader political context, and cultural allegiance) on children and youth, and their pathways in life. As Cosaro (2005) argues, the experiences of children and youth, and their understandings of their world, are informed by their interactions with their environment and the people around them. This interaction results in a co-constructed understanding of self and environment (Spencer, 2008) and an understanding of children and youth as active participants in society (Davies, 1998).

Research of the past two decades has amplified these complexities. The interaction of genes and context in circumstances of nonnormative stress is increasingly well documented in resilience processes. Cicchetti (2013), Meaney (2010), and Rutter and his colleagues (2004), amongst others, have demonstrated the biologically embedded processes of resilience and gene-environment interactions that alter gene expression and brain development. Similarly, research is beginning to underscore the role of culture in resilience processes (Masten, 2011; Ungar, 2011). Here the impact and interaction of dominant and minority cultures and how youth are positioned within and between them is considered (Cabrera & Padilla, 2004; McGee & Spencer, 2012; Ungar et al., 2007). Further consideration is given to the fluidity of culture. Nguyen-Gillham et al.'s (2008) study of how young people living in Ramallah, Palestine understand resilience exemplifies this. They conclude that "the trajectory of resilience reflects the course of life itself" (p. 296) where resilience components, as impacted upon by culture, vary and even become contradictory over time. Accordingly, cultural aspects of resilience can alternate between protective and harmful. For example, while respect for and adherence to elders can provide youth with important safeguards and guides when navigating through challenges, adherence in contexts of abuse can silence and further harm youth (Akello, Reis, & Richters, 2010). Consequently, researchers increasingly caution against the "romanticizing" (ibid, p. 219) of culture in explorations of resilience (see also Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2010). Finally, the interaction of children, their contexts and culture means that children and youth will have different tipping points: our understanding of children in a particular setting is temporal and tentative (Rutter, 1986; Ungar, Ghazinour, & Richter, 2013).

Couched within these complexities, researchers need to be cognizant of the how these variables shape the functioning of children and youth. The implication is that researchers need to account for observations – what we are understanding,

theorizing and reporting, and how this shapes practice, policy and research. And, researchers need to account for observations that reflect functional adaption of youth in the face of non-normative stress – processes reflective of resilience (Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013; Rutter, 2012). Moreover, researchers need to probe how methodological choices capacitate robust observations.

To summarize, a resilience lens that asks of researchers to consider both the risks and resources implicated in the protective and promotive processes operating in the lives of marginalized youth, is a multifaceted endeavour further complicated through the variation of individual, relational, contextual and cultural aspects. This complexity is intensified in that outcomes are a key component of understanding resilience processes. And, just as individual, contextual, cultural and temporal aspects will impact these processes, so will they impact how "doing well" is framed or understood within a particular context, at a particular time (Bottrell, 2007). Subsequently, what is normative or functional in a given sociocultural context at a given point in history, may be understood quite differently in a different setting, at a different point in time. For example, Theron, Theron, and Malindi (2013) reported that a rural South African community understood "doing well" to mean, amongst other things, that local youth progress at school, rather than achieve academically. Academic achievement has been considered an indicator of resilience in global north communities (see Werner, 2006). Given the South African history of unjust access to schooling, particularly for black youth, school completion (rather than success) is often considered a pathway to a brighter future. Consequently, this South African community encouraged youth to complete schooling, even if this meant repetition of grades. This moves us away from a static understanding of resilience and one-size-fits all research methodologies (also innovative ones) toward culturally-respectful, contextually- and temporally-relevant designs that potentiate rigorous accounts of resilience processes.

15.2 Existing Reports of Innovative Research Methods

In response to the complexity of research with marginalized and vulnerable populations (Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000; Smith, 2012), including children and youth (Dalgado, 2006; Greene & Hill, 2005; Morrow & Richards, 1996), a plethora of innovative approaches to qualitative research has emerged. Such developments are reflected in the field of resilience where calls for a more globally relevant understanding of the term have been accompanied by a call for the consideration of more innovative research techniques (Liebenberg & Ungar, 2009). These innovative approaches have often focused on facilitating participant reflection on the taken-for-granted aspects of their experiences (Daniels, 2003; Karlsson, 2001), followed by improved elicitation of these reflections (Harper, 2012; Liebenberg, 2009) – often referred to as providing participants voice (Larson, 1999; Thomson, 2008). It is further argued that these approaches "equalize" the researcher–participant relationship, by reducing power imbalances (Harper, 2002;

Lomax, Fink, Singh, & High, 2011). Espoused methods include but are not limited to the use of visual arts and narratives: drawing, photography, video, oral storytelling, music and drama (Knowles & Cole, 2008; Margolis & Pauwels, 2011; Milne, Mitchell, & De Lange, 2012; Theron, Mitchell, Smith, & Stuart, 2011). The effective use of these methods is well documented and demonstrated in the literature. What these publications often lack, however, is a critical review of their relevance for use with specific participants, or within specific cultures or contexts. This may be due to the fact that for most researchers, the focus is on establishing congruence between the research question, guiding theory, and method (Packard, 2008; Pink, 2001).

For example, Bagnoli (2009) presents a lucid discussion of "graphic elicitation" methods, in particular self-portraits, relational maps, and timelines. Reflecting on the use of these methods in her own research with young people in England and Italy, she connects the reflective properties of each method with fundamental dimensions related to each study's focus (i.e. self-perception and identity, personal positioning in relational worlds, and experiences over time). Bagnoli cautions that older participants, particularly those approaching or in adulthood will be reluctant to draw (in the case of self-portraits), and the difficulties of using timelines with participants with mental disabilities where understanding consecutive timing of events is challenging. While she discusses these important limitations regarding work across age and variations in understanding of time, she stops short of exploring her choice of methods given the specific participants and their varying contexts.

Similarly, in their investigation of adolescent masculinity and abjection among 15–18 year old, male South Africans from rural and urban areas, Blackbeard and Lindegger (2007) employ "photo-biographical" research, or a combination of auto-photography (participant-produced images) and photo-elicitation interviews (where participants are interviewed about their images). The participants included black, isiZulu-speaking and white youth. The authors use social constructionism to account for the interaction of "dominant norms in microcultural contexts" (p. 31) and the associated impact on subjectivity and personal constructions of masculinity. They also highlight the value of their chosen methods in exploring these processes with youth; certainly the richness of their findings supports the judicious choice in methods. Nevertheless, they too do not account for the appropriateness of the research design given the disparate socio-cultural contexts of their participants.

The consequences of negating the link between methods, participants, and their cultural context is demonstrated in Packard's (2008) review of the power and limitations of participatory visual methods. Packard researched the experiences of street-involved adults in Nashville specifically to reflect on the claims of image-based methods as able to reduce power imbalances between researchers and participants. Drawing on existing studies, he concludes that auto-driven photo elicitation is one of the most powerful ways of bridging participant-researcher worlds. He adds that recent reductions in the cost of cameras have increased the likelihood of participants being familiar with them. While this implies consideration of the contextual relevance of the tools selected, Packard's argument is rooted

in the need to eliminate the researcher-as-teacher dynamic that may entrench power imbalances. Based on these premises, and participant affirmation of image-based methods, he assumed suitability of method and engaged in his fieldwork. But as he demonstrates, many participants were not comfortable with the method. For example, while several participants claimed to know how to operate a camera, declining instruction, it often later transpired that they did not know how to take photographs. The result was embarrassment pertaining to photographs and related strain in elicitation interviews. Packard's review of the consequences of this cultural and methodological mismatch identifies *heightened* power imbalances and *diminished* participant voice, contradicting available literature's claims regarding image-based methods.

Collectively then, such findings highlight the need for more cautious choice of innovative methods. They also call for more critical review of research choice in descriptions of methods, including research questions and theoretical frameworks, and, importantly, how participants and the context and culture in which they navigate, shape methodological choices. To illustrate this, we turn now to methodological choices made in the Pathways to Resilience Project.

15.3 Exemplar from the Pathways to Resilience Study

The Pathways to Resilience Research Project (see www.resilienceresearch.org) is an exploration of the interaction of individual and contextual risks, formal and informal resource provision and use, and the interactive effects of resilience on functional outcomes for youth living in adverse contexts. This mixed methods study, located in five countries around the world (Canada, China, Colombia, New Zealand, and South Africa), begins with a quantitative survey of 1,200 youth in each site, followed by qualitative engagement of 120 of these youth.[1] For the qualitative component, each site is provided with guidelines on participant selection and three core questions to be explored with youth: (1) What risks do you face in your relationships and your community?; (2) How do you cope with these risks?; and (3) How do you know you are doing well? Each site is encouraged to integrate qualitative approaches that make most sense given the local context and culture. To do this, research teams at each site work with local advisory committees (LAC) to ensure cultural and contextual relevance and suitability of research approaches used and questions asked. LACs comprise individuals working with youth in each research context and/or living there, and who are knowledgeable about the risks and resilience processes of local youth. To demonstrate how in one project with common goals and methodological guidelines the use of specific methods varied depending on socio-cultural context, we draw on exemplars from South Africa and Canada.

[1] Ethical approval was obtained from all collaborating universities and community partners.

In South Africa, youth participants were predominantly Sesotho-speaking, and from traditionally African, rural and semi-rural contexts. These youth are socialized to respect an interdependent way-of-being, and so conceptualize themselves as interconnected with all creatures, incarnate and deceased (i.e., ancestors). They are also socialized toward deep respect for themselves and others, and towards a harmonious, fluid existence (Dandala, 2009). While the aforementioned potentiate protective resources (see Phasha, 2010; Theron et al., 2013; Chaps. 4 and 5, this volume), they also prompt methodological challenges: formal, one-on-one researcher-youth interaction is at odds with this rural, fluid, collectivist culture. When piloting the structured interview guide recommended for use across all Pathways sites, Sesotho-speaking youth engaged in interviews respectfully but offered only stilted, polite answers (Theron & Malindi, 2012). Even when experienced researchers interviewed participants in their mother tongue, their responses remained superficial. Consequently, the research team explored more culturally congruent, participatory approaches that might facilitate rich, group-based investigation of youths' resilience processes.

One of the methods agreed upon with the LAC was the Mmogo-method^{TR} (Roos, 2008). This method engages small groups of youth in building individual representations or artifacts illustrating their resilience processes, using traditionally African materials such as clay, beads, and dried grass stalks (see Fig. 15.1). Each

Fig. 15.1 "This [pointing to the clay model] is a fowl. When there are traditional ceremonies at home we slaughter a fowl sometimes . . . these are ancestral ceremonies, so that the ancestors can come and heal me . . . Just knowing that I can be healed and be able to continue with my life, go to school makes me strong. Not only when you are ill but also when you are looking for a job, the ancestors can also help . . . My grandmother tells us stories about ancestors – she taught us that even when you are a Christian you mustn't forget about the ancestors, because they can still help." (Puleng, focus group participant)

youth explains what his/her representation means in the presence of the group, and the group expands on this explanation, using comments and/or questions. This quasi focus group process is largely organic and unhurried (Roos, 2008). Possibly because of the use of indigenous materials, or possibly because of its generally unstructured, leisurely, group-based approach, the Mmogo-method™ facilitated data generation that advanced understanding of how socio-cultural positioning shapes universally reported resilience processes. For example, in the clay-based interpretations of their pathways to resilience, participants often: (a) included traditional cultural artefacts (e.g., mats, bowls, jewellery) with an emphasis on cultural pride and belonging; (b) sculpted traditionally dressed female caregivers (mothers, grandmothers, and aunts) emphasising the role of women in African families and the protective function of attachment to such women; and/or (c) symbolised traditional rituals (e.g., slaughtering of animals to invite ancestral protection and support) foregrounding how cultural beliefs fostered self-regulation, agency and mastery processes. Although the Mmogo-method™ had drawbacks (Theron, Malindi, & Theron, 2012), it is doubtful whether traditionally western methods (e.g., individual interviews) would have facilitated equally rich explanations of participants' resilience processes.

By contrast, sites situated in Atlantic Canada included rural and remote communities in a state of chaos for historical reasons and urban communities where youth are from families experiencing high levels of disorder. Open-ended interviews initially used by the research team proved difficult for youth and yielded thin data. Possibly, because youth participants had experienced so many interventions and transitions in their lives, they had trouble reflecting on their past experiences and identifying key turning points and resources that may have benefited them. Open-ended questions were too broad to support youth articulation of their tumultuous lived experiences. Accordingly, timelines were used as the central means of assisting youth in tracing and structuring their life stories. At the start of each interview youth were asked to reflect their life experiences on a line drawn on a sheet of paper.[2] Youth were asked to attach life events to the line beginning with normative events (When were you born? How old are you now? When were your siblings born? When did you start school? When was the first time you changed school?), building into more stressful events (When did you get your first social worker? When was your first encounter with the police? When were you removed from home for the first time?). This visual and participatory approach provided youth a way of literally seeing their experiences in a chronologically ordered way (see Fig. 15.2) and of holding onto this information throughout the interview. This method ensured a structured space for participants to reflect on their experiences. Simultaneously the method maintained the freedom required in qualitative research for youth to discuss issues of importance to them, facilitating the co-generation of data that were rich life stories. Able to see the various components of their lives – catalyst events and outcomes, together with various actors and resources – youth

[2] Youth or researchers documented the timeline, depending on the youth's preference.

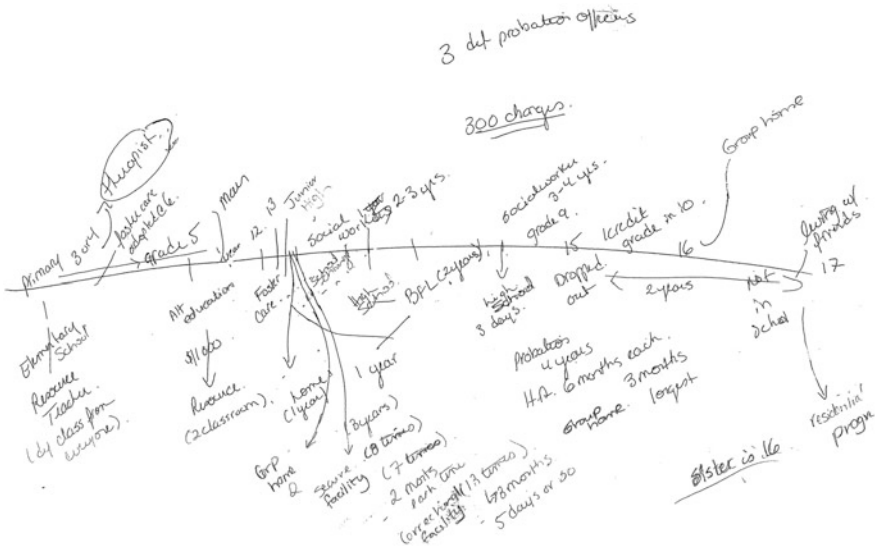

Fig. 15.2 Example of timeline

were able to reflect on and better articulate their experiences. Consequently, youth narratives contributed to our understanding of the how and why of their pathways through adversity and why certain pathways predominated. Given the contextual reality of these youth, one of predominant chaos, an approach that provided less structure and more creative freedom may have been experienced as overwhelming.

Conclusion

We are in no way suggesting that the methods in the exemplars reported above were free from limitations. However, these exemplars illustrate that innovative methods capacitate the study of resilience when they offer a culturally and contextually congruent medium that is cognizant of, and even celebrates, the similarities, differences and cultural situatedness of participants (Lewis & Kellett, 2005). Furthermore, the culturally-attuned artifacts generated in the Pathways Study are yielding dividends in community-researcher partnerships that are helping us understand and promote youth resilience. In South Africa, for example, photographs of clay artifacts and youth explanations thereof were used, with youths' permission, to support youth-workers and teachers to understand local youths' knowledge about resilience processes, and harness such indigenous knowledge to promote youth resilience. During lengthy training sessions held at community centers and schools, researchers, teachers and youth workers explored the resources that local youth considered optimally supportive of their resilience – as embodied

(continued)

in their Mmogo artefacts – and how adults could maximize youths' access to and use of these resources. At the close of one such training session, a teacher remarked: 'This reminded me: our ancestors are important resources for our children here. I will use this to support our children better'.

In conclusion, judicious methodological choices potentiate the generation of rich, rigorous data that can in turn facilitate complex theorizing that challenges simplistic understandings of resilience and encourages community representatives (like teachers and youth workers) to pay more attention to how youths themselves explain resilience processes. To this end, researchers need to attend to three key questions: (i) how does the selected method amplify and foreground local voices; (ii) how well does this method answer questions of 'why' and 'how' pertaining to resilience processes, given the cultural context of participants; (iii) and how valuable is this method in promoting meaningful understanding of resilience, particularly with regards to community-based dissemination of findings? Attention to the aforementioned promises innovative research processes that deliver more sophisticated, useable theories of resilience across cultures.

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Chapter 16
Ethical Principles in Resilience Research: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity and Responsibility

Laurie "Lali" D. McCubbin and Jennifer Moniz

Historically the construct of resilience emerged out of the study of competencies developed and cultivated in children's early development in the context of adversities. Such studies allowed scientists to address the scientific question of why some children are able to proceed on a course of healthy physical, social and psychological development in spite of the odds against them (see Garmezy, 1974, 1985; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1982). The rapid advancement of this line of inquiry resulted in a proliferation of investigations pointing to relatively consistent findings of competencies that had predictive validity of positive outcomes when circumstances projected dysfunction in individuals' adaptation over time (see Garmezy, 1985; Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984). These foundational studies pointed to a range of causal factors inclusive of positive parental interactions, supportive grand-parenting, higher parental educational level, and elements in the family environment and community context that cultivated both vulnerabilities as well as the development of competencies (Werner & Smith, 1992). These studies identified specific targets including individual dispositions (self-esteem, self-efficacy and temperament) and processes such as positive parenting, improving standards of living, and reduction of social inequities. These studies also promulgated idealized perspectives that the resulting theories, measures, methodologies, and findings were generalizable to all or most populations. They set the stage for scientists to adopt extant studies and methodologies as templates to guide future resilience-focused research and interventions. These

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L.D. McCubbin (✉)
College of Education, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, USA
e-mail: mccubbin@wsu.edu

J. Moniz
Department of Educational Leadership, Sports Studies, and Educational/Counseling Psychology, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, USA

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generalizations also played a role in nurturing the search for commonalities that could possibly contribute to the development of "invulnerable" or "stress resistant" children and ultimately 'resilient' adults across cultures, countries, and contexts.

By drawing from research and writings on indigenous people in the United States, Australia and Canada our chapter discusses the ethical issues and associated limitations of extant research and assumptions of commonalities. The current body of work on resilience has been largely guided by western theories, methods and findings imposed on, or generalized to, populations who had no/limited voice in the process and whose knowledge base of resilience and methods of study were marginalized and/or dismissed. We note that ethical concerns surface when collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, without giving appropriate consideration to the involvement, worldviews, understandings of adaptation, and most importantly, the sanctioning of indigenous communities. Therefore, the ethical principles presented in this chapter urge the foregrounding of indigenous and native epistemologies throughout resilience-focused research processes, from the design of a study, to the dissemination, and application of findings.

16.1 Ethical Issues in Resilience Research

Generally, public policy agendas seek to improve upon the well-being and health of indigenous people and families (Andrews & Withey, 1976). Smith (2000) argued that improving the resilience processes of indigenous peoples must involve the understanding and incorporation of their worldviews and knowledge in research and the subsequent design and implementation of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programs. Guided by research on indigenous peoples of First Nations people in higher education, Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) identified four ethical principles in the conduct and application of research: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity and Responsibility. These were subsequently applied to research protocols and ethical guidelines by various organizations including the National Aboriginal Health Organization and the Aboriginal Capacity and Research Development (Ball & Janyst, 2008) and the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Center (Ermine, Sinclair, & Jeffry, 2004). These four principles are applicable to current and future resilience research too.

16.2 Overview of the Four R's

Respect refers to the need for resilience research focused on various ethnicities, races or cultures to: (a) reflect indigenous ways of knowing in research; and (b) adapt methodological approaches to data collection to observe culturally-responsive resilience processes. **Relevance** is viewed as a commitment to understanding resilience in the participants' context (Kim, Yang, & Hwang, 2006) and to

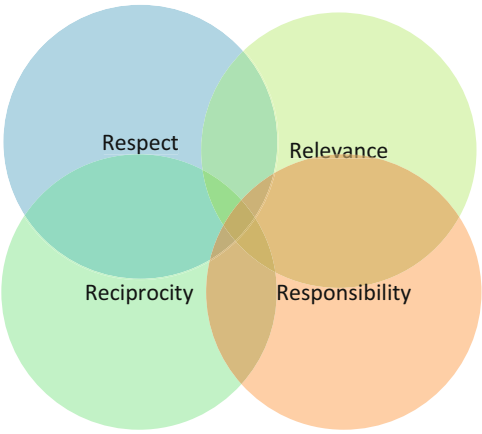

Fig. 16.1 The four R's of ethical research on resilience: respect, relevance, relationships and responsibility

generating knowledge of resilience that is culturally relevant and applicable to the population being "studied." **Reciprocity** refers to the bi-directional and dynamic interplay between researchers, communities where research is being conducted, and its people. The design and implementation of resilience research calls for information to flow both ways in these partnerships. In collaborative, respectful partnerships, reciprocity involves an exchange leading to shared understandings of the purpose, value, legitimacy, and processes of the research, for the benefit of both science and participating communities. **Responsibility** involves a commitment to ensuring that the research processes and research goals are in alignment with the values, beliefs, and practices of the indigenous population.

The Four R's of ethical research, summarised in Fig. 16.1 below, are interdependent and share influence in the study of resilience among ethnic and indigenous populations.

In the sections that follow, each will be discussed more fully by drawing on examples from the resilience literature related to indigenous peoples.

16.2.1 Respect

Respect is embedded in indigenous epistemologies and the use of methodologies that ensure indigenous voices are heard and applied to guide research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Smith, 2000, 2012). The active involvement and participation of indigenous peoples is particularly salient when working with populations with a history of being subjected to abuses and exploitation in the name of research. Many indigenous peoples have experienced scientists imposing power, privilege and oppression and methods of coercion and intimidation to legitimatize and control the research process (Smith, 2012). From this perspective, ethical resilience research can be defined as inquiries embedded in the community and/or culture of the population 'being studied' and grounded in an indigenous epistemology that

affirms the cultural integrity and worldview of participating people. The affirmation of indigenous ways of knowing, particularly in relation to adversity and the identification of protective factors/processes, is an important index of respect.

Historically, research with ethnic populations, particularly in the United States, has been influenced by priorities and guidelines set forth by funding agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (see National Institutes of Health, 2014). The inclusion of ethnic and culturally diverse populations is required, but the guidelines allow categorical classifications (e.g. Hawaiian, First Nations, American Indians and Aleuts) to serve as a proxy variable for ethnicity and culture without substantiation of cultural knowledge or ethnic/minority population involvement. The voices of these ethnic and diverse cultural populations (e.g. their diverse worldviews, language, customs, spiritual beliefs, ancestral beliefs and identity) are important to the advancement of resilience research. This may require use of an emic rather than etic approach and applying indigenous knowledge to define resilience and related key concepts (including adversity, stressors; protective and recovery factors, and positive adaptation). Furthermore, at times, the psychometrics of measures used to assess the key constructs of resilience fall short of scientific statistical standards and cultural relevance (McCubbin, McCubbin, Zhang, Kehl, & Strom, 2013). Respect can be shown by setting and maintaining standards of scientific credibility in the operationalization and measurement of the complex constructs of resilience in ways that align with the culture of study participants.

Popular/etic conceptualisations of resilience may be viewed as reflective of a colonial mindset with western notions embedded in its conceptualizations and definitions. In these conceptualisations, cultural knowledge is typically disrespected, dismissed, or devalued by scientists and so immigrants and/or indigenous persons are confronted with culturally dominant explanations of resilience which can displace their life history and patterns of functioning. Thus, they are called upon to engage in a struggle within themselves to find common ground and reconcile their cultural and psychological conflict arising from competing values, beliefs, and practices (see Diamond, 2012; Smith, 2012). Consequently, the concept of resilience is often viewed in immigrant and indigenous communities with apprehension, frustration and outright anger as it has been misused to mask or avoid the study of culturally sensitive processes associated with adaptation. For example, a Filipina feminist and Human Rights Activist articulated this lack of respect and the cultural incongruity of the concept of resilience in her report at White House briefings after Typhoon Yolanda in 2013:

> No, we are not resilient. We break, when the world is just too much, and in the process of breaking, are transformed into something difficult to understand. Or we take full measure of misfortune, wrestle with it and emerge transformed into something equally terrifying. . .this is in sync with our indigenous worldview. . .in which every Filipino child used to be raised: an understanding of reality, including ourselves, as metamorphic (or capable of transformation). . . we carry the tales of our old heroes and muses, our elementals, who confront, in each re-telling, test of strength and spirit. . .To say that Filipinos are resilient is an assurance for those who have imposed upon them – much and repeatedly. (Rosca, 2013)

This quote reveals the many layers of respect needed in resilience research. From an ethical standpoint, resilience research needs to: (a) respect indigenous worldview(s) and indigenous ways of knowing; (b) find meaning in the indigenous language and narratives (tales) used to define processes of resilience and transformation after atrocities; and (c) recognize the historical context of colonialism embedded in the construct of resilience.

The importance of culture-based narratives, or storytelling (alluded to above), as a methodology for gathering information *and* for understanding the meaning of life experiences related to resilience is echoed in the phrase "malama ko aloha" shared among Native Hawaiians (Johnson & Beamer, 2013). This phrase, repeated and transmitted across generations, demonstrates the importance of intergenerational communication of cultural values, traditions, practices and history through storytelling, song and dance. "Malama ko aloha" comes from the rallying cry of Princess Manoa in battle where she fought alongside her husband, witnessed his death, and gave her life for her people to continue to fight into the night. The story of Princess Manoa symbolises the resilience of Hawaiian culture to persist and survive despite cultural genocide. The "cry" reflects the underlying values of Aloha – love and sacrifice for one's people – and the importance of gender equality where both women and men are warriors together side by side.

The use of storytelling as a research technique has enhanced research efforts to identify risk and protective factors as well as adaptation processes in cultural context (Cook-Lynn, 2008). Stories of resilience from the people, by the people, and with the people can reveal transformative, protective, and recovery processes that empower individuals and/or a community around a collective narrative. The power of collective narratives lies in their potential to sustain communities and nations and maintain cultural values and identity even in the face of insurmountable odds.

16.2.2 Relevance

Relevance refers to understanding resilience in the context of the communities and cultures who participate in resilience-focused studies. Cultural relevance is central to the conduct of resilience-focused research on indigenous populations (see Cross, 1998; Smith, 2000). The topic of resilience and its definition need to be relevant to, and sanctioned by, indigenous communities, reflecting their needs and competencies. This is based on the premise that research must be pertinent to the issues and concerns of the population being studied (see Cottrell, 1990; Diamond, 2012; Ungar, 2010). Achieving a shared understanding of the relevance of a resilience study moves research beyond securing funding, or obtaining approval by human participants, and/or addressing a gap in theory, in ways that ensure utility of findings to participating communities.

Relevance is also about keeping the socio-ecological context in mind in identifying risk and resilience factors/processes, particularly when working with

culturally diverse communities (McCubbin et al., 2013; Ungar, 2013). Understanding vulnerabilities and adaptation processes in specific socio-ecological contexts calls for a complex, emic approach that is sensitive to the culture and history of the social ecology. Adversity may have historical and/or ancestral roots that play an influential, if not profound, role in shaping a child's vulnerability and competencies into adulthood. Over time, historical traumas can creep into the developmental milieu of a child. Thus, relevance in resilience research includes, but is not limited to, paying attention to: (a) the historical context of adversities; (b) the place and/or land and its meaning to the people, the community and the culture(s); (c) the cultural traditions, practices, values and indigenous knowledge within a community; (d) the spirituality that may be embedded not only in the people and the culture but in the land and history itself; and (e) the transformations that have occurred over time across generations – including those that exacerbate the adversities and daily stressors local people encounter (see Smith, 2000, 2012).

To illustrate the above, in preparing an environmental impact report for a proposed bauxite mine on a South Pacific Island, Diamond (2012) investigated how rapidly forests might regenerate after being cleared for mining and which tree species were useful for timber, nutritional, or other purposes. When asked, the indigenous people identified 126 plant species and for each whether it had seeds and fruits that were edible. The islanders also reported that of these edible fruits were discovered "only after Hungi Kengi" (Diamond, 2012, p. 237). They learnt about these fruits from an older, indigenous woman who was a child in 1910 when a devastating cyclone named "Hungi Kengi" hit the island. The cyclone flattened the same forests being studied for Diamond's impact report, leaving devastation in its path and threatening islanders with starvation. To survive the people of the community purposefully explored the wild fruit species and learned which were poisonous and non-poisonous, and how some poisons could be removed through food preparation processes. The old woman transmitted the knowledge of these fruits through oral histories across time. Should another cyclone hit, indigenous knowledge would be relevant for fellow villagers and their survival. Thus, if allowed to surface, and if recognized, indigenous knowledge offers vitally relevant information about local resilience processes rooted in the culture and life experiences of local people.

16.2.3 Reciprocity

Meaningful resilience research with indigenous populations involves the establishment of reciprocity and allows a collaborative foundation upon which current and future research is securely based. Reciprocity involves the cultivation, nurturance, and maintenance of a cooperative dialogue that builds trust. It includes the formulation of a common purpose between the scientific community and people who participate in the research, and a willingness to cultivate transparency and sharing in the research process (McGregor, Morelli, Matsuoka, & Minerbi, 2003).

Scientists are called upon to reveal their intentions, beliefs, theories, methods, and hypotheses. In turn, community members exercise their ethical responsibility to reciprocate by sharing their worldview, the methodologies they use to gather information, and their culture-based speculations underpinning the predictions they make about life in their community. Their understanding of adversity and competencies, grounded in their worldview and life experience, own research and theories, may be different from perspectives of researchers and politicians of what processes are needed to promote resilience for indigenous people. For example, the U.S. Congress's 1959 approval of Statehood for Hawaii is often cited as landmark evidence of a U.S. intervention that reduced the vulnerabilities created by colonization (e.g. loss of sovereignty) and promoted adaptive processes (representation and voice in Congress, economic development and federal programs) for indigenous Hawaiians (Cooper & Daws, 1990). In contrast, and demanding consideration, Native Hawaiians framed their vulnerability as being created by the U.S. government's overthrow of the monarchy in 1893 and demanded that their lands be returned to them.

Reciprocity may be viewed as having three fundamental elements. The first is the cultivation of mutually agreed upon objectives for research based on the relationship between researchers and the people involved. The second is a shared research design and methodology – i.e., one grounded in the scientific rigor of the profession *and* in the roots of indigenous epistemology of the people participating in the study. The third element is shared interpretation of research findings. To give meaning and value to the discoveries unveiled through resilience research, explanations of these must be shaped by the theories and scientific methodologies of the researchers *as well as* the indigenous worldview and language of the participants involved. By encompassing all three elements, reciprocity encourages co-created knowledge that potentially empowers the community and echoes indigenous people's voices about resilience while enhancing the evolving body of research on resilience.

There is also reciprocity in honouring local communities in the dissemination of knowledge. Many times indigenous communities are apprehensive about participating in research because past researchers laid claim to indigenous knowledge, words of wisdom and experience, as a new scientific "discovery" with little/no credit to the community and its people and their knowledge base (Cross, 1998; Diamond, 2012; McGregor et al., 2003).

16.2.4 Responsibility

Responsibility, the fourth of the ethical issues in resilience research, addresses fundamental questions about: (a) protection of the community and participants from risks created in the initiation and conduct of the study; (b) expectations on deliverables to the community and the participants, and what the community expects in return from the scientists and the investigation; (c) the ethical

responsibility of sharing data and findings to assist in reparations to the community for past injustices and atrocities, such as the return of lands to the people; and (d) research findings being used to address the needs of indigenous people and to restore protective factors/processes that were suppressed, marginalized, or destroyed due to structural oppression and/or colonizing processes. These protective factors/processes, dismissed as part of an indigenous past, were and continue to be important to the resilience of indigenous populations.

As researchers of resilience, it is scientists' responsibility and ethical duty to engage in dialogues with the communities about these questions to jointly seek answers with all relevant stakeholders. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to the research institution(s) and the respective personnel invested in the project, the funding agency or agencies (when applicable), the community and its leaders/elders, and the participants in the study. Discussion needs to occur about stakeholders' access to information and data at various stages of the research; their voice in the dissemination of the findings; and their ability to use the findings to enable, and/or urge reparation for, their community and its citizens.

The complexities of responsibly reporting indigenous worldviews of adversities (inclusive of historical trauma) and interdependent competencies, deserve in-depth examination and explication. This examination includes the issues of ownership (O), control (C), access (A), and possession (P) of the data, also referred to as OCAP (Schnarch, 2004). Responsibility involves addressing the following questions: Who owns the data? Who gets to keep possession of the data? How will the findings be disseminated? Will the findings enhance or hurt the community? For example, First Nations in Canada have adopted the policy of collective ownership of group information, and rights to control and manage the data gathered about their community (Schnarch, 2004). Ownership refers to the principle that Indigenous groups should own their data, similar to how individuals own their personal information, biological specimens and historical data. Control refers to various stages of research including how and what data is collected and how findings are disseminated.

Western notions of ownership and possession need to be clearly defined when working across non-Western cultures as these concepts have different meanings in non-Western communities. To find a common language, such discussions can be guided by existing ethical codes such as those provided by the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA, 2009). The debate of who owns information gathered through research endeavors could be considered along a (typically Western) continuum: at one end of the spectrum data and research information belongs to indigenous people and more specifically the community from which it was gathered, and at the other end of the spectrum, researchers own the data and information. Mostly though, a paradigm shift is warranted that establishes true equalitarian partnerships between researchers, community representatives, and participants; with indigenous and community members themselves being co-researchers. This facilitates a respectful process that facilitates that all voices can be heard and collective decision making can be conducted. Specifically, the AIPA (2009) states that by providing the community with some ownership of the

data, researchers and mental health providers are helping with the ongoing survival of marginalised/indigenous communities and thus their resilience. Inherent in this responsibility is community building.

Community building is vital to research. By building community connections, the ethical conundrums of respecting indigenous ways of knowing, collecting culturally relevant data, ensuring reciprocity, and joint responsibility of data dissemination to the scientific community and community stakeholders can be addressed. Community building can be enhanced by the inclusion of an insider/s in the study (i.e., someone who is a member of the culture and/or community and has intimate understanding of the context and culture). This objective may be achieved in several ways. One method would be to develop an advisory board/council to oversee the research process from initiation to completion. Many indigenous tribes have advisory boards of community representatives to review proposed research that will involve members of their community. Such boards can also include stakeholders in the research process and the broader community. They facilitate collaborative community-researcher relationships and assist in the creation/collection of data and dissemination of findings. Advisory boards promote continuous community engagement throughout the research process and sustainability of interventions that result from the research (see Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2010; Theron, 2013; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2013).

While community engagement is an ideal goal to strive towards, it is time-consuming and can be fraught with obstacles such as power struggles and people (including indigenous folk) using the rhetoric of ethics as a forum for their own personal, political and financial gains. Unprotected information can also undermine community building – data needs to be kept confidential so as to ensure that information collected during the research will not be used to harm individual members of the community. Harm can be done from many sides – i.e., not only by the researchers, funders and institutions, but also by indigenous leaders and community members. Unethical use of the data needs to be addressed among indigenous peoples and their communities. Being an indigenous community member or leader does not absolve one from violating research and/or practice ethical principles outlined in this chapter and those within the profession. Therefore council/advisory board members should understand research processes and protocols and urge responsible research. In that way research can embody a collaborative partnership that can jointly enhance scientific knowledge and empower community and its people (Ball & Janyst, 2008; Chaskin, 2001; Martin-Hill & Soucy, n.d.; Putt, 2013).

16.3 A Challenge to Resilience Scholars

Adaptation is a commonly referenced construct in the resilience literature used to characterize status but also evolutionary processes encompassing a complex interplay between adversity and protective resources over time. Dubos (1965) captured this dynamism in his Silliman Memorial Lecture:

> While so essential in every day discourse, the word adaptation is treacherous because it can mean so many different things to different persons. The layman, the biologist, the physician and the sociologist use the word, each in his own way, to denote a multiplicity of genetic, physiologic, psychic and social phenomena completely unrelated in their fundamental mechanisms. . .These phenomena set in motion a great variety of totally different processes the effects of which may be initially favorable to the individual organism or social group involved, and yet have ultimate consequences that are dangerous in the long run. Furthermore an adaptive process may be successful biologically while undesirable socially. (pp. 257–258)

For indigenous, marginalised, and/or culturally diverse populations, the process of adaptation is probably even more complex. It involves balancing competing components of well-being, inclusive of language, culture, community, finances, health, as well as patterns of functioning (McCubbin & McCubbin, 2013). The challenge to resilience researchers is to capture and explain this complexity ethically.

Furthermore, the concept of the cost of resilience emerges as an important but underdeveloped scientific area of inquiry and an ethical issue, which demands attention from resilience scholars, particularly those working with indigenous communities, or marginalised cultural groups. Is there a cost to individuals' efforts (particularly those from indigenous/marginalised cultural groups) to protect themselves from psychological harm in the early years? Could this cost include developing health issues later on? Findings in health disparities research – also referred to as the weathering hypothesis among African Americans (Geronimus, 1992) – support this notion. As children learn, cultivate and develop protective factors in the face of adversity, one must ask what the long term psychological, social, interpersonal and physical consequences would be and what competencies need to be cultivated to reduce such risks and vulnerabilities. As such, ethical researchers must ask what the cost of resilience is and if/how resilience plays a role in existing health disparities among older adults.

While Indigenous Hawaiians, American Indians and Alaskan Natives are characterized as resilient in the face of colonisation and genocide, these populations are also considered to be vulnerable. Is perpetuating the construct of resilience in everyday life in itself creating an additional stressor, particularly for those who are marginalised or oppressed due to circumstances beyond their control? Ethical researchers will be sensitive to the cautionary note that resilience scholarship may indirectly maintain oppression by placing the responsibility on the "resilient" individual to overcome adversity, rather than on governments and other institutions to address the structural forms of privilege that maintain a system of inequality, adversity, and atrocity (Bok, 2010; Smith, 2000; Smith, 2012).

The concept of adaptation should be broadened to include adaptation of political and organizational entities as it relates to removing structural barriers of oppression that perpetuate adversities and stressors (Smith, 2000). An ethical responsibility of resilience scholars is to enhance our understanding of adaptation, recovery and resilience, not only at the individual and familial level, but also at the higher exo- and macro-system levels, especially for points of prevention and intervention.

The complexity of defining and measuring adaptation as a process remains an uncharted domain of scholarly importance, particularly from an indigenous world-view. Adaptation is a fundamental construct for understanding resilience as a process particularly for populations subjected to colonisation, oppression, genocide, expulsion, and forced migration (see Dubos, 1965). To be ethical, researchers must acknowledge that the dominant western/minority-culture paradigm of risk and resilience needs to be challenged. In its place, more holistic notions of collective resilience, adaptation and well-being need to be considered and investigated across culturally diverse ecologies.

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Part IV
Conclusion

Chapter 17
Culture and Resilience: Next Steps for Theory and Practice

Catherine Panter-Brick

> *Culture is perhaps the most neglected topic in the study of risk and resilience. (Feldman & Masalha, 2007, p. 2)*

17.1 Introduction

Both culture and resilience are slippery concepts. When it comes to actual measurement, they can prove as nebulous as terms such as lifestyle and empowerment. Lifestyle, for instance, is a term that denotes a typical way of life for an individual or social group – but it encompasses personal identity, use of technology, place of residence, and characteristics ranging from politics to health. Conflating beliefs, behaviors, and social structures, this term has come to mean everything and nothing, which is partly why scientific research has quietly dropped phrases such as lifestyle diseases when referring to the risks of non-communicable health conditions. The term empowerment may well suffer the same fate; it is a term pertinent to the social, economic, educational, political, legal, moral or spiritual strengths of individuals and communities, but one that is often used carelessly.

Are the words culture and resilience as hollow as the terms lifestyle and empowerment? Only if we deploy them, in research and practice, with little care and attention. Culture is often conflated with context, and resilience with the mere absence of disease (Almedom & Glandon, 2007). In the study of risk and resilience, it is best to keep nebulous thinking at bay. We might otherwise be tempted to equate culture with society, religion, or ethnicity, boxing individuals into neat analytical categories, and led to cast resilience as the pole opposite of vulnerability – a supporting actor to the lead role of risk, in analyses of responses to life adversity.

We can remain alert to a common pitfall: research on resilience offers limited insights where culture is relegated to the role of a single predicting variable. Culture, like gender (Springer, Stellman, & Jordan-Young, 2012), is not an independent variable. A reductionist analytical framework, characterized by categorical thinking about context, is particularly important to avoid when working with youth,

C. Panter-Brick (✉)
MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA
e-mail: catherine.panter-brick@yale.edu

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who are likely to negotiate and navigate multiple, changing, and often contradicting cultural, socioeconomic and political worldviews.

In this chapter, I examine how we can appraise 'culture' in ways that inform risk and resilience research, and in ways that help us capture what really matters for youth. I advocate greater clarity of purpose with respect to concepts, methods, and evidence in the field of resilience research, with a view to informing next steps for theory and practice. The challenge here is to articulate a clear conceptual and methodological framework for appraising cultural resources relevant to resilience, with a specific lens on youth.

To begin with, we need definitions of terms that help us appreciate differences, processes, and change, rather than promote homogeneity or stereotype (Luthar et al., 2000). Culture is best defined as shared knowledge or shared expectation – a shared understanding of the world. Risk is best defined as a situation involving elevated odds of undesirable outcomes – and resilience as the process of harnessing resources in contexts of significant adversity to sustain end goals (Panter-Brick, 2014).

17.2 How Is Culture Evaluated in Ways That Are Relevant to Resilience?

Cultural anthropologist William Dressler pioneered a compelling framework to capture the significance of cultural worldviews in a quantifiable way. His models of *cultural consonance* or *dissonance* measure the 'good fit' or 'relative gaps' regarding an individual's social position vis-à-vis dominant cultural models that articulate, for example, 'what is a good life' or the essential components of good social standing (Dressler, Borges, Balieiro, & Dos Santos, 2005). As his research shows, the gaps between social expectations and everyday realities can be mapped onto an individual's stress physiology, risk of depression, or even skin color – all potent biological markers of social adversity. Importantly, cultural consonance models have specific, practical goals: to connect individual-level analysis with cultural norms and social structures. These models capture heterogeneity of outcomes rather than monolithic associations between cultural norms and health outcomes: thus culture is amenable to quantification in a useful yet meaningful way (Dressler, 2012). Offering specific ways to connect health and culture, this approach can be expanded to the study of resilience and cultural values.

In order to incorporate cultural consonance analyses in resilience research with youth, we might begin with the following conceptual and methodological steps. First, we would convene focus groups to elicit worldviews on what constitutes 'a good life' and culturally relevant indicators of resilience. We would also appraise young people's goals against the backdrop of what other groups in society espouse as normative goals for social, economic, or political behaviors. We would assess cultural and resilience domains with free lists, and analyze these data through

multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis. Second, we would construct a survey, reaching out to a representative sample of young people to ask how each person measured up to these culturally-relevant goals. Thus we would measure an individual's relative consonance or dissonance of beliefs and behaviors from the normative goals that matter for that locality or community. Statistically, consensus of cultural domains would be determined through eigenvalue ratios and correlation matrices of participant responses. Third, we would establish whether individual-level health outcomes were demonstrably associated with individual-level dissonance or incongruity from cultural norms.

In 2006, we attempted this approach with a team of local researchers in Kabul (Panter-Brick, Eggerman, Mojadidi, & Mcdade, 2008). While the people of Afghanistan have been described in news reports as being traumatized by war, more helpful portrayals by social scientists argue that Afghans exemplify extraordinary resilience in the face of ongoing conflict and poverty (de Berry et al., 2003). In our work, we wanted to understand what dimensions of adversity really mattered for young people who were striving for socioeconomic advancement, in a country set back by three decades of war but bolstered by new opportunities for education in the wake of a massive reconstruction effort after the fall of the Taliban regime. From focus groups, we established the gender-specific social aspirations, expectations, and frustrations amidst a cohort of students who had reached university-level education. We asked about their ambitions, how families might be supporting or pressurizing them, and what material, economic, and political inequities placed significant barriers in their lives. Armed with an established consensus on 'what mattered' in terms of goals, resources, and stressors in their lives, we implemented a survey at scale, asking a random sample of male and female participants the degree to which they reported confidence in achieving the normative goals that mattered in their culture, along with reports of key resources and stressors. We also measured blood pressure and immune competence, as two excellent markers of psychosocial stress that provide an objective, as opposed to subjective, measure of psychosocial stress under the skin (Panter-Brick et al., 2008). In this Afghan sample, we arrived at a clearer understanding of the normatively desired social position, alongside an understanding of experiences of status incongruity and conflicted social positions; for instance, we focused close attention on how youth reconciled personal ambitions with goals that would satisfy the cultural dictates of family honor. We observed pervasive gender differences in the experience of family-level stressors: associations between stressful experiences and objective markers of physiological stress were especially marked for young women.

This approach has several advantages. It is fine-grained enough to capture how youth think, and how they intersect with other social groups who may espouse different mainstream cultural values in the same locality. It also powerfully knits together social with biological research, in relating culture to biology in ways that exemplify the complexity of family-level and individual-level pathways to resilience. In his own work, William Dressler has sought to understand the interplay of shared collective meanings (about social class and race) with individual-level health outcomes manifested through stress biomarkers such as blood pressure

(Dressler et al., 2005). In turn, Thom McDade (2002) applied this approach to study status incongruity and stress for youth in the context of culture change, in Samoa – one of the countries reporting the highest rates for youth suicide. Samoan youth must reconcile traditional Samoan values of respect to hereditary chiefs against more individualistic American values. Interestingly for these youth, levels of physiological stress (measured by monitoring immune status) were not so much predicted by their socioeconomic status, nor even by family membership to traditional or modern 'culture,' but predicated on the *incongruity* of their social position. Immune competence was most compromised, indicating higher psychosocial stress, for those young people who had to simultaneously adhere to two very different cultural scripts regarding socially-condoned behaviors; these were, for example, young people completing a western-style of education while also under pressure to fulfill their traditional social obligations. Such type of analysis has also been extended to cultural models of teenager status in the United States, showing how the incongruity between socioeconomic position and the pursuit of symbolic markers of status drive higher blood pressure among urban African-American youth (Sweet, 2010, 2011).

17.3 Culture and Resilience

Why is a fine-grained approach to culture important to the study of resilience? The answer to this question lies in the normative dimension of resilience. Resilience is a normative concept, related to moral values and social aspirations (Panter-Brick, 2014; Ungar, 2004), not just a functional concept related to doing 'better-than-expected' in the face of adversity. Thus resilience has important moral, social, and political dimensions, beyond the consideration of poor wellbeing or development. An ethnographic approach to resilience 'across cultures' needs to uncover the 'political economy' of health, in which individual resilience is a matter of navigating systems of oppressive poverty, insidious violence, vastly unequal opportunities for economic or educational advancement, or overt marginalization on the grounds of sexual or religious affiliation (Panter-Brick, 2014). Thus resilience is consonant with dignity (and family honor) in Afghanistan, with social justice (and adherence to land) in Palestine, or with respect (and money) in inner cities of the US. Resilience is also observed at social and structural levels, in the ways 'successful societies' have navigated and negotiated the economic and political changes sweeping the world stage in the name of neoliberalism (Hall & Lamont, 2013). These moral, social, and structural dimensions to resilience matter for sustaining health and wellbeing.

A simple metaphor for understanding resilience is evoked from images of a strong oak resisting tempest-force winds (Southwick, Litz, Charney, & Friedman, 2011), or alternatively, flexible bamboo or reeds. I prefer to evoke the image of a coil (Fig. 17.1). Our lives can feel, at times, very tightly bound, and at other times, loosely so. Resilience is understood as the process of overcoming adverse

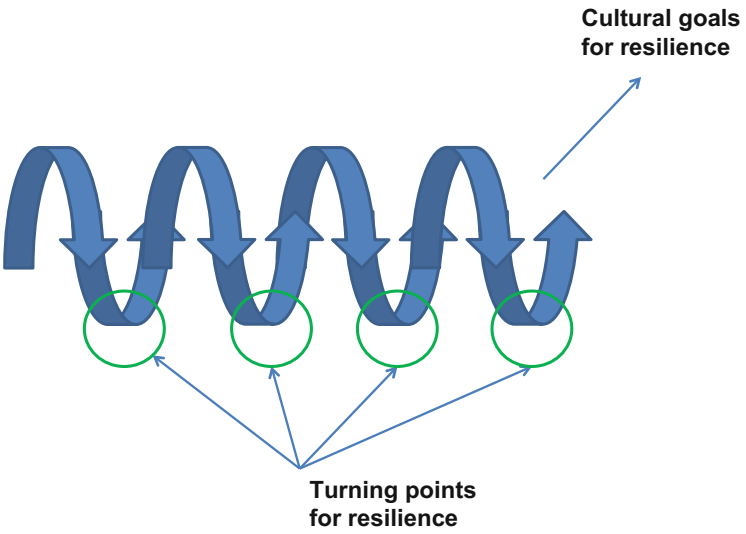

Fig. 17.1 Coils as an image for culturally-specific trajectories of resilience

experiences, as evidenced by an upward trajectory in response to as shock or stressor (Masten, 2011, 2014). Resilience research rightly focuses on identifying the turning points that can leverage change – or "knife off" past disadvantage (Rutter, 2012). The 'mission' of resilience research is to uncover which time points are the most sensitive for effective intervention, and which resources are the most culturally-relevant to foster upward trajectories. If resilience is akin to 'bouncing back' from adversity, it is imperative to understand the process of 'bouncing forward' also (Walsh, 2002, p. 35). A culturally-grounded approach to resilience identifies which specific cultural goals are the leitmotiv that drives wellbeing trajectories towards specific pursuits.

The relevant question to ask is as follows: what exactly are the culturally-salient goals that underlie the processes of risk and resilience. For youth, these goals might be articulated in terms of material, spiritual, economic, and/or political goals. They might be multiple, contradictory, fluid, and dissonant from the goals of other social groups in the same locality. We cannot simply conflate resilience with good health or social functioning, because resilience to adversity might be differentially understood as the pursuit of justice, power, or respect – these are culturally-specific goals that may trump goals related to the pursuit of individual-level health or happiness. Moreover, we cannot conflate the goals of youth with those of senior generations, especially in societies undergoing social change with a demographic bulk of youth under the age of 21. In situations of great adversity, as Arthur Kleinman (2006) has argued, "what really matters" is the moral dimension of human experiences where people live a life of danger or great uncertainty. In situations of ongoing conflict

such as Palestine and Afghanistan, the moral dimension of human experience is highly relevant to understanding resilience.

17.4 Resilience Across Cultures

Ethnographic work in Palestine has provided a vivid example of this normative dimension. The construct of resilience by Palestinians rests on a search for social justice, whereby collective adherence to land is an integral component of individual-level psychological wellbeing; specifically, the concepts of collective social justice and individual wellbeing integrally overlap. This is a significantly different appreciation from the constructs on resilience prevalent in many Western societies, who promote control or mastery of environmental or social challenges (Southwick et al., 2011). Thus Nguyen-Gillham, Giacaman, Naser, and Boyce (2008), on the basis of thematic analyses of narratives from Palestinian youth, explained that the "concept of *sumud* – a determination to exist through being steadfast and rooted the land – is at the heart of resilience." Moreover, suffering and endurance are concepts interpreted at both collective and individual levels. In this context of violent strife and oppression, the resources that matter for "the good life" are deployed as weapons for ideological resistance. In the words of one of the youth interviewed: "education means everything. It is our only weapon. They can kill everybody including our families but not our education because it is in our heads" (Nguyen-Gillham et al., 2008, p. 295). To unpack the construct of resilience in this context is to unpack its normative, interpretive dimensions: for Palestinians, resilience is the sheer will to survive. Issues of human rights and social justice are placed here at the heart of psychosocial adjustment and wellbeing.

A comparative analysis of ideologies of resilience is slowly emerging in current literature. Thus, in exemplary studies of youth responses to political violence, Barber (2008, 2013) articulated clearly the critical differences in how youth 'make sense' of violence. He contrasted the examples of Palestinian and Bosnian youth, both of whom had to make sense of devastating war. Palestinian youth articulate war as having a legitimate purpose, and are actively engaged in resistance. Because the conflict is meaningful, social suffering can be integrated in a coherent narrative and ideology. By contrast, Bosnian youth experienced the war as 'senseless,' and showed worse outcomes for depression and posttraumatic stress. As Barber (2013) emphasized, specific conflicts vary "critically on the degree to which young people involved in them find legitimacy, sensibility, and moral/political clarity" (p. 464). Thus cultural world-views impact collective meaning-making in ways that shape individual mental health.

Afghanistan is another remarkable example of how cultural values form the bedrock of resilience (Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2014). Adversity in Afghanistan encompasses the ongoing brutality of war, the misery of poverty, pervasive gender inequality, and massive social inequalities created by drug trafficking and political corruption. In this context, risks to health are multiple, even as health, education,

and economy sectors are steadily improving. Yet Afghan families have demonstrated formidable resilience – with the family proving the only stable institution available to provide support for social and economic advancement. Afghanistan is a prime example of collective resilience embedded in social contexts of family and community networks (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012). It is also a context in which the quality of family dynamics have demonstrable impacts on youth mental health (Panter-Brick et al., 2008), over and above individual-level risk factors, such as gender and trauma exposures: our epidemiological work showed that experiences of domestic violence and poor caregiver mental health were notable childhood adversities impacting resilience at both family and individual level, over and above war-related violence.

Cultural values and family relationships may be essential to a sense of order and meaning to life. But intense distress and frustration arises for those unable to reach the standards of 'a good life,' or in the case of Afghans, an 'honorable life' (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012). Adherence to cultural values can thus bring about intense hardships. Panter-Brick and Eggerman (2012, p. 383) described this sense of 'entrapment' – the intense social frustrations brought about by failure to attain cultural milestones. Afghans become entrapped within the system of cultural values that define their lives, because of the structural impediments in realizing them. What emerges here is an analysis of the *political economy* of resilience: people are trapped by the "broken economy," too poor to draw support from relatives as they can ill-afford visits that entail reciprocal hospitality. They become trapped by cultural blueprints for social prominence, respectability, and honor; in extreme cases, the dissonance between everyday life and social expectations leads to murderous violence or attempted suicides.

Thus adherence to 'culture' can prove wholly negative for health and wellbeing, in ways that make resilience perverse – rather than optimal – where efforts to achieve an honorable life engenders suffering and harm. Thinking through the value-laden dimensions of resilience are moments well spent, especially with interventions aiming to be 'culturally-sensitive' or 'culturally-relevant' to support those living in adversity. Kohrt et al. (2010), for example, have censured naïve expectations of social reintegration for Maoist girl soldiers in Nepal, where it had been expected that local rituals would reinsert them into traditional social structures with little consequences for their psychosocial wellbeing. A critical analysis of normative values in cultural, political, and historical context is essential to guard oneself against superficial views of resilience. It also moves us in the direction of useful and specific comparative perspectives – to inform research on the cultural narratives and the political economy of resilience.

One useful approach is to pay close attention to the vocabulary of resilience. We cannot expect this term to be readily translated across cultures, but close synonyms capturing the essence or meaning of this construct are certainly instructive. For example, for young recruits to the armed forces, resilience may be equated with force and strength, expressing the idea of survival and resistance against the odds of a life-threatening task (Southwick et al., 2011). For civilians living with the threat of violence and oppression, resilience may be more accurately conveyed by

sustained hope, against all odds of better outcome (Almedom et al., 2005; Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2010). Thus our thematic analyses of face-to-face interviews with 1,011 adults and 1,011 youth in Afghanistan boiled down the construct of resilience to this simple phrase: "life feeds on hope" (Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2010, p. 71). This specific understanding of resilience comes close to what playwright and political activist Václac Havel (1990) understood by hope: it is not the illusion of a favorable outcome in the future, but "the certainty that something makes sense" (p. 181). Hope, like resilience, is essentially the production of a coherent narrative that explains personal and collective experiences.

17.5 Measuring Cultural Narratives with Small Samples

As hinted above, measuring risk and resilience in meaningful ways requires a mixed-methods approach: we might begin with participatory methods to evaluate emic understandings of resilience, followed by well-designed surveys to connect individual position with larger cultural goals, in order to achieve scale, reproducibility, and comparative clout. In terms of quality checks on empirical evidence, this means that samples need always to be well described, in terms of recruitment procedures and representativeness. But it does not mean having to work with necessarily large samples, at least when it comes to evaluating cultural models of shared knowledge or shared expectation. Certainly, the analytical step from 'qual to quant' needs to be reflexive and well-integrated. Risk and resilience research also needs a multi-systems approach with dialogue with a wide variety of interlocutors: individuals, families, teachers, community leaders, health providers, and policy-makers. Policy makers and practitioners, for example, like the "rhetoric" of resilience (Ager, 2013) but need a firmer grasp on how it is measured for programmatic action. That firm grasp comes from clarity in describing cultural models, and their relative traction with well-defined social groups.

An example of culturally-grounded methodology for developing an understanding of wellbeing in the face of everyday adversity comes from work conducted in Kabul by Ken Miller, Patricia Omidian, and Afghan colleagues (2006). Their goal was to develop a rapid assessment of cultural cosmology with respect to "doing well" and "doing poorly." Research began with a small convenience sample of just 10 men and 10 women, asking each participant to narrate *two* stories from their community: these stories contrasted people who were functioning well according to local norms, despite the hardships they endured, and people who continued to suffer, despite the passing of time. This generated 40 detailed narratives, reviewed for thematic content to construct indicators of wellbeing and distress and to develop a systematic checklist for implementation in a city-wide survey. Within 15 days, the authors had achieved a culturally-grounded assessment of mental health and psychological wellbeing, one that showed good reliability and construct validity. The resulting emic scale corroborated well with a WHO-endorsed instrument to measure mental health in international surveys (Panter-Brick, Eggerman, Gonzalez, & Safdar, 2009). This mixed-methods approach provides a methodological exemplar

to operationalize vulnerability and resilience across cultures. It is an approach that values ethnography for appraising culturally meaningful concepts and local narratives, but extends the reach of ethnography into population-wide surveys.

Such approaches resonate with the one adopted by the International Resilience Project on a global scale. This mixed-methods investigation involved more than 1,500 youth, living in 14 communities across 5 continents (Ungar, 2008) to examine the global as well as the locally specific aspects of risk and resilience. It aimed to examine how youth are "either doing well or not doing well" in a diverse sample of challenging environments. The Child and Youth Resilience Measure was developed in a participatory fashion, and implemented as a survey to elicit responses covering 32 domains pertaining to the personal, relational, community, and cultural resources that could reliably be measured across 14 different contexts (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). Analysis served to identify how youth negotiated health resources and navigated points of tension in their communities. As Ungar (2008) concluded, the aim of such research was to move "the discourse of resilience beyond conventional interpretations" (p. 233), through a more thorough appreciation of how cultural values are foundational to the capacity to cope.

17.6 Next Steps in Research and Practice

As recently argued in an editorial review on resilience and child wellbeing (Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013, p. 335), "there is no longer much room for conceptual laziness and methodological naivëté in cross-cultural research on resilience. While a resilience framework usefully pulls us away from risk and deficits, it is not useful if we remain conceptually hazy, empirically light, and methodologically lame" (Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013). We can think of these temptations – to be conceptually lazy, empirically light, and methodologically lame – as the three deadly sins of research on resilience and culture: a triple jeopardy.

Just as the term risk has been used sloppily to imply that all individuals belonging to a high-risk group are deemed vulnerable, the term resilience has been used carelessly to refer within high-risk groups to individuals who somehow 'beat the odds.' The literature on resilience in child development and epigenetics, for example, is peppered with terms such as 'resilient children' and 'resilient genes.' This shorthand annotation of genetic and developmental research makes little room for careful consideration of personal attributes, social categorization, and cultural affiliation.

Many authors have cautioned against 'terminology creep' – or conceptual slippage from population-level outcomes to individual-level attributes. For example, with respect to children living in poverty, Felner and DeVries (2013) noted that discussions about building resilience obscured important differences between population-level health outcomes, on the one hand, and processes or developmental pathways, on the other. In their words, "efforts to build resilience have, as one implicit, if not explicit goal, a focus on addressing the probabilistic ways in which

conditions of risk (poverty and its correlates) disrupt developmental processes in the lives of children and youth in a cohort. What is also important to understand in this discussion is that it now makes the widespread view that children or youth in poverty are 'high-risk' completely inappropriate. They have clearly been potentially exposed to relatively greater levels of conditions of risk, and they may be seen as a *population* 'at risk.' But they are not 'high-risk' individuals" (p. 111). Similarly, an understanding of culture in resilience research cannot be helpful if we slip into categorical thinking about ethnicity, nationality, or religion. Rather than treat culture as a categorical variable, we might take a leaf from research in the social sciences that strives to capture the range of goals that matter to the lives of youth and how these cultural goals underpin processes of risk and resilience.

Thus children and youth do not fall into neat categories of resilient or non-resilient people, exhibiting positive and negative health or social functioning outcomes. Resilience is negotiated, navigated, and driven by culturally specific, diverse, and often-changing goals. For youth, the relationship between culture and resilience is perhaps akin to *bricolage*, in the sense of tinkering with a vast array of intellectual pursuits, social networks, business goals, religious values, and so forth. This bricolage helps to put in place an array of different resources that will be deployed for coping with everyday life, strengthen resolve, and make sense of adversity.

Perhaps the most important lesson I personally drew from our resilience research with youth in Afghanistan is the importance of a coherent narrative that places the emphasis on trajectories towards the future (Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2014). It is remarkable that for Afghan youth, mental health is not only predicated on traumatic experiences in their past, but strongly predicated on their hopes and opportunities for the future. It is not the past, but the future, that shapes many of their responses to adversity. Some powerful directions for future research would thus incorporate the normative with the functional dimensions of resilience work, and include a fine-grained understanding of the significance of future aspirations and expectations for wellbeing, as shaped by cultural affiliations.

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